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**HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE
PRE-DYNASTIC KHITAN**

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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TECHNICAL NOTES

1. This study is only a historical research. The foreign names and terms of the ethnic tribes and states in this dissertation have been almost all adopted from the Chinese historical sources, because the original pronunciations of most of them are now unknown. I have made no attempt at linguistic analysis. With the exception of some Romanized terms *Khitan*, *Türk*, *Uighur*, *etc.*, which are often used in Western literatures, these foreign names have been written in standard phonetic notations, the Pinyin, according to their Chinese transcriptions.

2. The lunar calendar was usually used in classic Chinese literatures for dating before 1911, I therefore use *the first month*, *the second month* to specify each particular month, but not *January*, *February* in English.

3. The source materials, which are quoted in Chapter 2. The Historical Database, are not duplicated in the other chapters of this dissertation. When they need to be quoted, "*Materials { }*" is used to mark them.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Khitan as a Historical Entity

The Khitan. The Khitan were an ancient ethnic group who lived on the upper course of the Liao River located in Manchuria, exactly in the basin of the modern Shira Muren and Laoha Rivers. The earliest records on the Khitan in the Chinese historical sources can be traced back to the beginning of the Northern Wei in the second half of the 4th Century. Through more than half a millennium development, the Khitan people ultimately founded a very strong empire, which lasted over two hundred years (907-1125). They alternatively used "Khitan" or "Liao" as their state name.¹

The history of the Khitan or Liao has considerable importance in Chinese history. At the time of its greatest territorial expansion, the Liao Empire covered the major part of modern Manchuria, the major part of Inner and Outer Mongolia and the northeastern corner of China Proper.² The dynastic history of the Khitan was coexistent with firstly, the separated Five Dynasties (907-960) and then the semi-unified Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), and during this period, the Khitan established relations with them in many ways. These relations showed extremely complicated, sharp military conflicts alternating with peaceful contacts. Such relationships seriously impacted the growth and decline of these Chinese dynasties.

The historical significance of the Liao Dynasty also manifests in its institutional system – the dual administration system, which was implemented for controlling different ethnic groups in different ways. As an administrative model, it was inherited by the non-Chinese successors of the Liao, such as the Jin, Yuan and Qing Dynasties, which were largely patterned on Chinese models.

Moreover, due to the influence of the great Liao Empire, the name Khitan had a history being misused to designate China. After the dissolution of the Liao Empire, some Liao refugees led by Yelü Dashi migrated westward to the oases and grasslands of Turkestan and established the Western Liao (also known as Black or Qara Khitan) Dynasty (1124-1211). The people of Turkestan thought those who declared themselves Khitan were from the East, the Chinese world.

¹ In 916, Abaoji declared himself emperor, and used "Khitan" as their state name; in 938, Emperor Taizong changed the state name from "Khitan" to "Great Liao"; in 983, Emperor Shenzong changed it back to "Great Khitan"; and in 1066, it was changed back again to "Great Liao", which was used until the fall of the dynasty.

² Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 41.

With the Mongol's expedition to the west, the name Khitan emerged in Persia, Arabia and Europe in its Altaic, Semitic and European variants. By the middle of the 13th Century, the words Kytay, Cathay, Kitai, Catai, Kathay, Ghotai, Chata, Hita, Katai, Xetai, Kataya and Cathan were commonly used to designate China, or rather north China.³ However, "such different writers as Rashid ad-Din, Marco Polo, Odoric Hamd-Allah, and Ibn Batuta applied the term specifically to Northern China to distinguish it from Southern China."⁴ Up to the 16th Century, after more than three hundred years of confusion, the problem was largely resolved. From then on, Westerners began to make clear that "Khitan" and "China" were one and the same country. In spite of this, the term Khitan still survives to modern time as the general name for China in most Slavonic languages.

The pre-dynastic Khitan. For ages, the history of the dynastic Khitan has drawn a lot of attention from scholars from both the East and the West, resulting in great numbers of research works. However, the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan has been relatively ignored. Yet viewing the history as an entity, the pre-dynastic history is undoubtedly significant in helping us to deeply understand the ups and downs of a group of people or of a state.

The pre-dynastic history of the Khitan lasted for over five hundred years (386-907). This long period was not only a time in which the Khitan tribes were continuously getting united, but also a time when the Khitan nationality developed. This period of history has the same historical significance as the dynastic history of the Khitan.

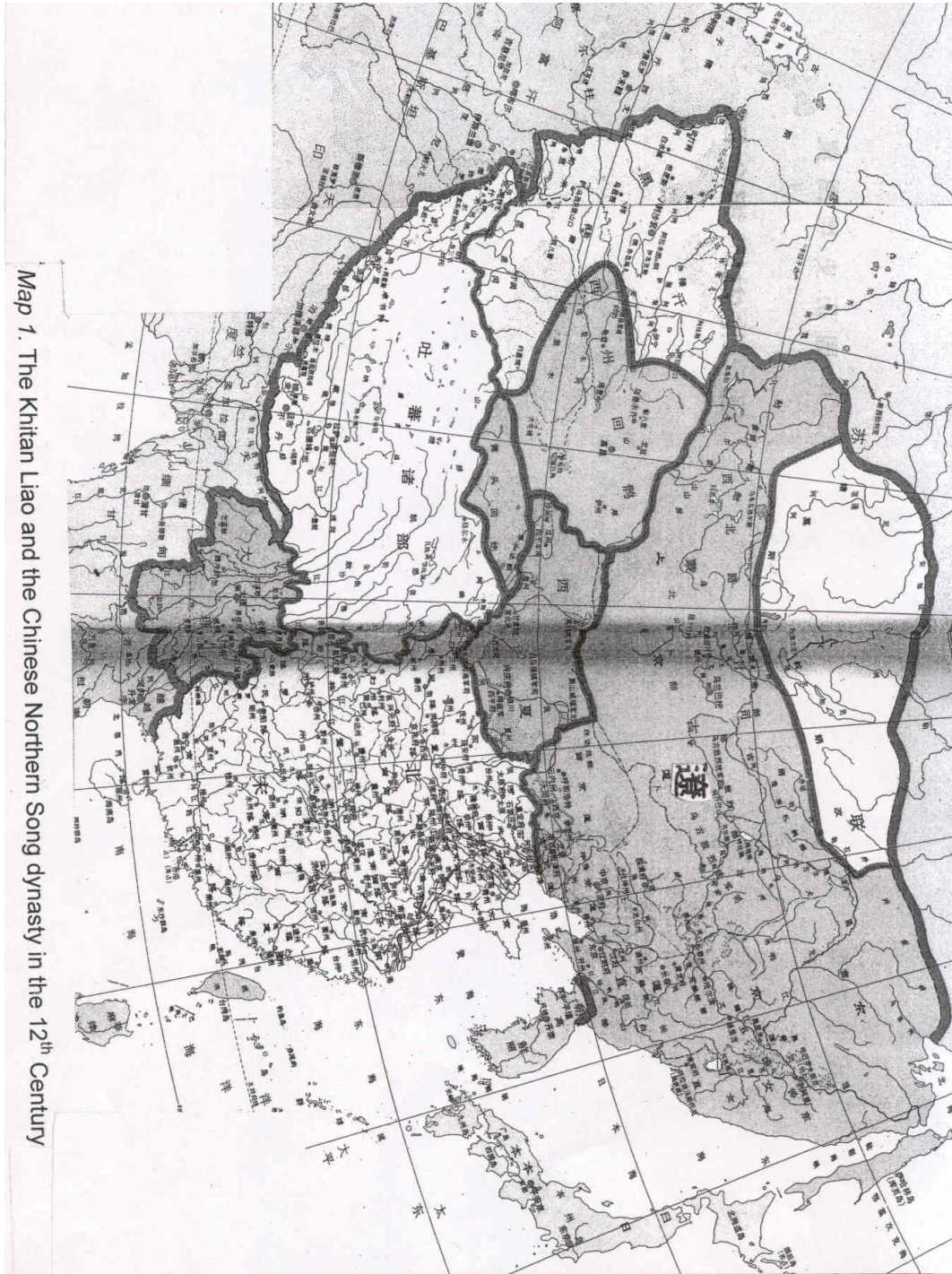
According to the *Liao Shi*, the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan can be approximately divided into three stages: (1). The stage of the Ancient Eight Tribes (from the Northern Wei 386-534 to the end of the Sui 581-618); (2). The stage of the Dahe Tribal Confederation (from the beginning of the 7th century to 730s); (3). The stage of the Yaonian Tribal Confederation (from 730s to 907).⁵

³ Feng, Jiasheng 1933. Repr. in: Feng, Jiasheng 1987, p. 1; and Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 2.

⁴ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 2.

⁵ *LS* 32. 377-379.

Introduction



Map 1. The Khitan Liao and the Chinese Northern Song dynasty in the 12th Century

The last two stages, which were contemporary with the Tang Dynasty, had historical significance in the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan. It was a crucial period, in which the Khitan got developed at a comparatively high-speed in economics, social organization and foreign relations. During this period, due to complex ecological conditions, the Khitan's economic base was built mainly upon animal husbandry, mixed with hunting, fishing and rough agriculture. The tribal industries, such as iron smelting, tool making, weaving and cloth making, were subsequently developed. Furthermore, in contacts with the Tang China, the economic base of the pre-dynastic Khitan was reinforced by the Chinese products, which were obtained through diplomatic means as well as trade and raids. The social organization of the Khitan had been developed into a tribal confederation from a separated tribal level, being a preparation stage for transition into a dynastic pattern of domination. The territory of the Khitan at that time was located approximately in southwestern Manchuria, to the south, adjoining China Proper; to the west, it earlier neighbored the Eastern Turkish Empire (581-741) and later the Uighur Empire (745-840). Thus if the Khitan intended to survive, having been sandwiched between these two stronger powers (one was sedentary based China, the other was the nomadic Turkish or Uighur Empire), they inevitably had to contact and confront them. In addition, the Khitan's development was also under the influences of the other neighboring states and tribes in Manchuria.

During the course of historical development, the economic, political and cultural interactions between different peoples prove very important. These interactions must be regarded as dynamics in historical development. Therefore, my study will concentrate on the Khitan's relations with its neighboring states and tribes. The general aim of my study is to try to create a relatively full picture of the Khitan at their pre-dynastic stage, and to present some reasonable explanations for why and how the Khitan could rise in that particular time.

1.2 The Dawn of Khitan History

How to define the beginning point of Khitan history has been a debated issue for some time. The Chinese historical documents have revealed some features about the emergence of this ethnic group. These features can be divided roughly into the following three different categories.

Rising at the end of the Han Dynasty: The Qing scholar Zhu Kebao (1845-1903) maintains that the name "Khitan" might have appeared as early as the Han times (206 B.C.-A.D. 220). The evidence that mainly based this upon was a dictionary, *Zi Lin*, written in the Western Jin Dynasty (265-316), in which the term of Khitan as a name of a people was included. This statement was strongly

criticized by the modern Chinese specialist Feng Jiasheng in 1933.⁶ He argued that it was of doubtful value because the *Zi Lin* was a later compilation by Ren Dachun (1738-1789). In addition, the Song dictionary *Guang Yun*, which quoted a *Zi Lin* reference to the Khitan, is not good evidence because before its appearance the *Zi Lin* had already been rewritten several times. Even the Song scholars no longer believed it was an original one. Therefore, he believed that without adequate collateral evidence, Zu Kebao's premise of argument was untenable. This position was reinforced by Wittfogol & Feng in the *History of Chinese Society, Liao (907-1125)* in 1949. However, Zhu Kebao's assertion was accepted by another Chinese specialist Chen Shu by providing collateral evidence from the *Jin Shi* in *Materials* {4}, which claims "Both the Kumo Xi and the Khitan were rising at the end of the Han Dynasty, and getting more prosperous during the Sui/Tang period".

Chen Shu suggested, "The opinion of the *Jin Shi* is probably based upon some grounds, because the *Jin Shi* and *Liao Shi* were compiled almost at the same time. Therefore, I am inclined to agree with Zhu Kebao's statement, even though it has no ironclad proof".⁷

Rising after Murong Huang's attack on Yuwen Yidougui in 344. The source in the *Liao Shi* in *Materials* {6(2)} records an event that the Xianbei were destroyed by Murong Huang and split up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and the Khitan. According to the *Wei Shu* and *Jin Shu*, this incident happened in the second year of Jianyuan (344). In the *Liao Shi*, there are two self-contradictory statements. In the view of the first paragraph of *Materials* {6(2)}, it is quite clear that the name "Khitan" first appeared in 344, deriving from the Xianbei. In the second paragraph of *Materials* {6(2)}, a contradictory statement can easily be found, because it claims that the Khitan began to call themselves "Khitan" in the Northern Wei period (386-534), see *Materials* {7(3)}. Obviously this paragraph has been copied from either the *Wei Shu* or the *Xin Tangshu*.

Feng Jiasheng supported the first description of the *Liao Shi* in *Materials* {6(2)}, by studying several other names or designations of the Khitan which occurred before the Northern Wei period. After linguistic investigation, he claims, "The term 'Khitan' was derived from the names of the Yuwen chieftains." The Yuwen chieftain's names, such as Xiduguan, Qidegui, Yidougui, Houdougui, Qitegui, which appeared in several historical sources, are different Chinese transcriptions of the same phrase. Moreover the pronunciation of these names is very close to "Khitan" in Turkic and Mongolic. Therefore, he assumed that the name "Khitan" came into existence no earlier than the end of the Western Jin

⁶ See Feng, Jiasheng 1933. Repr. in: Feng, Jiasheng 1987, pp. 4-6.

⁷ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 20.

(265-316), nor later than the period of the Northern Wei (386-534). He concludes finally, "From the above survey, it can be known that the term 'Xidu' appeared at the beginning of Taixing (318), no earlier than the end of the Western Jin. So the assertion of Zu Kebao is not correct. The fall of the Yuwen was in the second year of Jianyuan (344), while the founding of the Northern Wei was in the eleventh year of Taiyuan (386). There are nearly fifty years in between. How could the (Khitan) have no tribal name for so many years? It is unreasonable that (they) did not first call themselves 'Khitan' until the period of the Northern Wei. (The designation Khitan) that can be found in those dynastic histories is a Chinese transcription, but not the original one."⁸ In a later statement, he still insisted on this print of view.⁹

Emerging during the Northern Wei Dynasty. The records of the *Wei Shu* in *Materials* {7(1)} indicate that the Khitan as an independent group of people emerged exactly in 388. Some later Chinese historical documents agree on this issue. The term "Khitan" is first mentioned in the *Jin Shu* during the reign period of Murong Sheng (398-401) and in the *Zizhi Tongjian* in the first year of Yixi (405).¹⁰ The Khitan's occurrence in the Northern Wei Dynasty is generally stated by the compilers of the *Tong Dian*, *Xin Tangshu*, *Xin Wudai Shi* and *Qidan Guozhi*.¹¹ Modern scholars Karl A. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-sheng (Feng Jiasheng) clearly claim, "After the year 388 the transcription Ch'i-tan is established as the standard designation in the Chinese historical records".¹² Nevertheless, in the Korean historical documents, the term "Khitan" is recorded earlier than in the Chinese historical sources. In Korean history, *Sanguo Shiji* written in Chinese in 1145, it is recorded, "in the ninth month of the eighth year of King Xiao Shoulin (378), the Khitan raided the northern border of the Koguryō (Gaogouli), and defeated the eight tribes (of the Koguryō)".¹³ It is probably because the Khitan had political or military contacts with Korea earlier than with China.

Summing up the foregoing views on the beginning of the Khitan history, I would like to provide a tentative analysis in brief: First of all, "Qidan" is a Chinese transcribed term that occurred in the Chinese historical data as the standard designation as early as the Northern Wei Dynasty, precisely after 388. According to Feng Jiasheng's survey, however, there were several similar

⁸ Feng, Jiasheng 1933. Repr. in: Feng, Jiasheng 1987, pp. 15-16.

⁹ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, P. 2, note. 9.

¹⁰ *ZZTJ* 114. 3588.

¹¹ *TD* 200. 5485; *XTS* 219. 6167; *XWDS* 72. 885; and *QDGZ* 23. 222.

¹² Wittfogel & Feng 1949, P. 2, note. 9.

¹³ *SGSJ* 18. 140.

designations derived from the names of the Yuwen chieftains, which could be found somewhat earlier in the Chinese historical records between 318 and 385. These designations, such as Xiduguan, Qidegui, Yidougui, Houdougui and Qitegui, are believed to be other ways to name the Khitan, or in the other different Chinese orthographies. Second, as descendants of the Xianbei, the Khitan had been a composition of the Xianbei tribal community before the year 344. This period of history should be placed in the domain of the Xianbei studies. In 344, the Yuwen were defeated by the Murong Xianbei founded Yan state (285-370), while the Khitan and Kumo Xi split away from the Yuwen, and fled together to the region of Songmo. Even during this period of time, the Khitan was incorporated into the Kumo Xi. They still could not be regarded as an independent political power. Not until 388, when the Kumo Xi were defeated by the Northern Wei, and the Khitan broke from the Kumo Xi, starting a process of independent development as a political force in Manchuria. This is, I am inclined to believe, the beginning of Khitan history.

1.3 The name of the Khitan

With regard to this question, some explanations or speculations have been produced by scholars with different viewpoints. Here I will just try to sum up into the following three categories:

From designations of the Yuwen chieftains. This statement was held by Feng Jiasheng from historical and linguistic studies.¹⁴ First of all, he discussed the northern barbarian tradition of name giving. He suggested, "The people of the northern desert had no continuous family names. The names of chieftains were usually used as their tribal names, while the tribal names were also usually used as personal names."¹⁵ There is much evidence in the Chinese historical data to prove this. Secondly, after analyzing several designations of the Yuwen chieftains, Xiduguan, Houdougui, Qidegui, Yidougui and Qitegui, Feng Jiasheng has found out that they "sound rather similar". He points out, "These designations seem always to consist of two parts. The final *-kuei* or *-kuan* may be an early form of a suffix, which the *Liao Shi* renders as *go*. The base *Hou-tou*, *Chi-te*, etc. might be the root of later tribal name, *Chi-tan*."¹⁶ This investigation made it possible to speculate that the name Khitan evolved from the designations of their former controllers, the Yuwen chieftains.

¹⁴ Feng, Jiasheng 1933. Repr. in: Feng, Jiasheng 1987, pp. 11-16 and Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 2, note. 9.

¹⁵ Feng, Jiasheng 1933. Repr. in: Feng, Jiasheng 1987, p. 11.

¹⁶ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 2, note. 9.

From their ancestor's name "Xianbei". Its Xianbei derivation was postulated by Zhao Zhenji in his work, *Qidan Zuxi Yuanliu Kao (The Sources of the Khitan's Genealogy)*. The evidence he provides is the following: The term "Khitan" consists of two parts. The base *khi* was pronounced as *xie/hsie* in ancient Chinese articulation. The *xie/hsie* sounds as similar as *xian/hsien*, which is the root of "Xianbei". The suffix *tan* means "a place". Therefore, the term "Khitan" means "a place where the Xianbei had resided".¹⁷

According to the above evidence, Zhao Zhenji claims: "the Khitan were the remnants of the defeated Xianbei tribes who fled into the region that was between the south of Huang River (modern Shira Muren River) and north of Huanglong (or Helong, modern Chaoyang City of Liaoning Province), retaining the nomination of the Xianbei. Afterwards, they called themselves the Khitan".¹⁸

Original name "Xidan". This assumption is raised by the Japanese scholar Otagi Matuo with a historical and linguistic approach.¹⁹ He considers that the Khitan's original name is "Xidan" which means "the people who are similar to the Xi people" or "the people who inhabit among the Xi people."²⁰ The evidences he has offered is the following:

Historical evidence:

The term "Xidan" can be found both in the inscriptions of the Wanfo Cave and in the *Cefu Yuanguai*. It can be seen that the term "Xidan" was used until the beginning of the 6th Century.

The Wanfo Cave is located in the west bank of the Daling River, about half a kilometer northwest of Yi County of Liaoning Province. The cave is divided into two parts, the Eastern Cave and the Western Cave. In the Western Cave there is an inscription that was written in the twenty-third year of Taihe of the Northern Wei Dynasty (499) and was transcribed by Japanese scholars, Yanai Wataru and Inaba Iwakichi.²¹ In this inscription, it is recorded:

大魏景明三年五月九日造

尉喻奚丹使員外散騎常侍韓貞

It was made on the ninth day of the fifth month of the third year of Jingming in the great Wei (the Northern Wei) Dynasty (502).

¹⁷ Zhao, Zhenji 1992, p. 37.

¹⁸ *Idem.*

¹⁹ Otagi 1988, pp. 100-103.

²⁰ *Idem.* p. 101

²¹ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji et al. 1988 (vol. 1), p. 128, note. 3.

The explicit instructions were given to the Xidan envoy, the Yuanwai Sanqichangshi, Han Zhen.

Feng Jiqin assumes that "Xidan" is the abbreviation for the Xi and the Khitan/Qidan. However according to the Chinese traditional practice, it seems that the "Khitan" cannot be abbreviated to "tan/dan".²²

The *Cefu Yuangui* vol. 96 records:

憲宗元和五年十二月丁卯，麟德殿召對奚丹使，賜錦采金帛有差。²³

On the day of Dingmao of the twelfth month of the fifth year of Yuanhe (810), emperor Xianzong received the Xidan envoys in the Lingde Hall, and awarded a great variety of colored silk to them in accordance with their ranks.

From the above evidence, it can be seen that the Khitan people have been called "Xidan" for some time. Until the period of the Northern Qi (550-577) when the *Wei Shu* was being compiled, they were for the first time called "Qidan (Khitan)".

Linguistic evidence:

The term "Khitan" can be divided into two parts: *khi* and *tan*. The *khi* sounds *k'iei*, while *xi/hsi* sounds *xiei* in the Middle articulation. The *k'iei* and *xiei* are homophonic. Thus "Khitan" sounds similar to the "Xidan/Hsitan". The suffix *dan/tan* means "someone who is similar to ..." or "someone who lives among ...". "Xidan" means "a group of people who are similar to the Xi people" or "a group of people who live among the Xi people". This happens to correspond with the so-called "(Xi and Khitan) comprised different lineages but were of the same stock" that was recorded in the official histories. It could be inferred that the Xi and Khitan had been in the same tribal community, but belonged to different tribes. Therefore the linguistic origin of "Khitan" is "Xidan/Hsitan". This assumption is supported by Feng Jiqin in his article, "Youguan Xi zu zuyuan de liangge wenti (Two problems about the origin of the Xi)".²⁴

1.4 The Territory of the Pre-dynastic Khitan

During the pre-dynastic period, the Khitan's territory of residence and activities was constantly changing. In spite of this, the approximate regional scope could be drawn out with the help of Chinese historical records.

Before the Sui/Tang period. 1. After being defeated by Murong Huang in 344. According to the *Wei Shu*, the Khitan fled into the region of Songmo together

²² Feng, Jiqin 1984. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji et al. 1988 (vol. 1), p. 831.

²³ *CFYG* 976. 11463.

²⁴ Feng, Jiqin 1984.

with the Kumo Xi after being defeated by Murong Huang in 344.²⁵ The location of Songmo is the same as the modern area that includes the southern part of Hexigten Banner and the western part of Ongniud Banner of Inner Mongolia, that is to say, the region of source and upper reaches of the modern Shira Muren and Laoha.²⁶

2. After being defeated by the Northern Wei. The *Wei Shu* vol. 100, *The Description of the Khitan* records, "during the period of Dengguo (386-396), having been defeated by (the Northern Wei) imperial troops, (the Khitan) split off from the Kumo Xi. After several decades, ..., they had tribes several hundred *li* (1 *li* = 500 meters) north of Helong". According to the *Xin Tangshu*, the Khitan's territory in that period reached Korea in the east, the Xi in the west, and Yingzhou in the south and the Mohe in the north.²⁷ This region is the same as the modern area south of the Shira Muren and east of the Laoha, that is, the convergent region of the Shira Muren and Laoha. See *Map 2*.

3. Escaping from a joint-invasion. According to the *Wei Shu*, in order to escape from a joint invasion mounted by the Koguryō and Rouran, the Khitan migrated south from their old land to the east of Bailang River in the territory of the Northern Qi²⁸. The Bailang River is modern Daling River. The territory in the east of Bailang River refers roughly to the modern area that includes Beipiao County, Fuxin City and Zhangwu County of Liaoning Province.

4. After being defeated by the Northern Qi and forced by the Türks. From the record in the *Bei Shi* and *Sui Shu* in *Materials* {15, 21}, it can be seen that the Khitan were divided into three sections at this time: one was that of more than one hundred thousand captives who were distributed to several frontier prefectures of the Northern Qi. This is roughly the modern area in the northeastern part of Hebei Province and the northwestern part of Liaoning Province. Another was the remnants that sought refuge with the Türks on the steppe. The third section was that of ten thousand families who submitted to the Koguryō after being forced by the Türks. They resided in the northwestern part of the Koguryō. This is roughly within the territory of modern Faku and Kangping Counties of Liaoning Province.

In the Sui Dynasty. At the beginning of the Sui Dynasty, the above-mentioned three Khitan sections gradually submitted to the Sui. In the fifth year of Kaihuang (585), those who were captured by the Northern Qi asked to surrender to the Sui. Emperor Kaozu (Yang Jian, the founder of the Sui Dynasty) allowed them back to

²⁵ *WS* 100. 2223.

²⁶ Feng, Yongqian 1987, p. 119.

²⁷ *XTS* 219. 2223.

²⁸ *WS* 100. 2223.

their old land, that is the modern region northeast of the Daling River. Afterwards those tribes who had temporarily resided within the territory of the Koguryō in the Northern Qi period also surrendered to the Sui. Towards the end of the Kaihuang period, more than four thousand households of another tribe deserted the Türks and came to the Sui. "Gradually the Khitan tribes increasing in population then migrated northward in pursuit of water and grass. They settled two hundred *li* due north of Liaoxi along the Hechen River, covering an area five hundred *li* from east to west and three hundred *li* from north to south."²⁹ The Khitan's territory in the Sui period covered the modern area from the Laoha River basin in the west to the Liao River in the east. See *Map 3*.

In the Tang Dynasty. 1. At the beginning of the Tang Dynasty. This period was in correspondence with the time of the Dahe confederation of the Khitan. During this period, according to the *Jiu Tangshu*, the Khitan people "inhabited the old land of the Xianbei that was located south of the Huang River (modern Shira Muren River) and north of Huanglong, five thousand three hundred *li* directly northeast of the (Tang) capital". The territory "reached the Koryō (Gaoli) to the east, the Xi to the west, Yingzhou to the south and the Shiwei to the north. The Lengxing Mountains, which were located in (the Khitan) state, linked the western Mountains of the Xi in the south. Its area was two thousand square *li*.³⁰ It was roughly the same as the Khitan territory at the end of Sui period.

2. At the end of the Tang Dynasty. Towards the end of the Tang, the Khitan dramatically became stronger. By invading the neighboring states and tribes, such as the Xi, Shiwei, Jurchen, Bohai and even the northern territory of the Tang Dynasty, their sphere of influence was largely extended in three directions. It covered the area, which reached the Tao'er River basin to the north, Youzhou and Jizhou (the northern part of modern Hebei Province) to the south, and nearby regions of Hexigten Banner to the west.³¹ At the beginning of the Five Dynasties, the Khitan territory was three thousand *li* from east to west,³² compared with five hundred *li* in the Sui period.³³ Its eastern boundary was still the Liao River. See *Map 4*.³⁴

Concerning the western boundary of the Khitan at the end of the Tang Dynasty, most of the scholars believe it was the nearby regions of Hexigten Banner of Inner Mongolia. Towards the second half of the 9th Century, the Khitan

²⁹ *SS* 84. 1882.

³⁰ *JTS* 199. 5349

³¹ *XTS* 219. 6172; *XWDS* 74. 909.

³² *LS* 37. 438.

³³ *SS* 84. 1882.

³⁴ Sun, Jinji & Zhang Bozhong, 1986, p. 28.

occupied the land of the Xi, meaning that the western boundary of the Khitan's sphere of influence at least should be the same as the former western boundary of the Xi's territory. The Xi's territory at that time, as recorded in the *Xin Wudai Shi*, "was in Yinliang Chuan, which was located several hundreds *li* west of Yingzhou (modern Chaoyang City of Liaoning Province) and southwest (should be northeast) of Youzhou (modern Beijing).³⁵ This location corresponds roughly to modern Hexigten Banner and nearby regions. The modern Chinese scholars Sun Jinji and Zhang Bozhong have made different statement on this issue. They claim that the western border of the Khitan in the Tang Dynasty was the Lengxing Mountains.³⁶ However, according to the historical records, it can be shown that this assertion is not correct. The *Xin Tangshu* records, "(The territory of the Khitan) was located more than five thousand *li* directly northeast of the (Tang) capital. It reached the Koryŏ to the east, the Xi to the west, Yingzhou to the south and the Mohe and Shiwei to the north. "They relied upon the Lengxing Mountains for their protection". The *Jiu Tangshu* records, "The Khitan people inhabited the old land of the Xianbei that was south of the Huang River and north of the Huanglong ... The Lengxing Mountains, which were located within the (Khitan), linked the Xi's Xi mountains in the south."³⁷ The above records show clearly that the Lengxing Mountains was the boundary line between the Khitan and the Xi or the western border of the Khitan state, but not the western border of the Xi state. Having occupied the territory of the Xi, the Khitan's western border should have extended into at least the western boundary of the Xi state. Therefore the first statement on this issue is correct but not the second one.

The above description shows that from the Northern Wei to the Sui/Tang, the Khitan were constantly migrating in order to protect themselves from the invasions launched by the stronger neighboring forces. However, the movement was within a confined range, which was approximately between the present Shira Muren River and Chaoyang City. Up to the end of the Tang Dynasty, and in pace with the strengthening of their internal power, the Khitan's dominions increased greatly, laying a territorial foundation for the establishment of a great empire.

1.5. Modern scholarship on the Pre-dynastic Khitan

The Khitan were pastoral nomads who had a long history. In the middle ages of Chinese ancient history, the Khitan had inhabited Manchuria for centuries, with relationships that varied between temporary alliances and military conflicts with the neighboring states and tribes, particularly the Tang China. After more than

³⁵*XWDS* 74. 909.

³⁶Sun, Jinji & Zhang, Bozhong, 1986, p. 28.

³⁷*JTS* 199. 5349.

five hundred years of development, there was a powerful regime emerged, called alternately the Khitan state or the Liao State, at the beginning of the 10th Century. In confrontations with China, the Five Dynasties followed by the Northern Song Dynasty, the Khitan were almost always in a superior position. Their fame in the Western world at that time was far more acknowledged than that of their contemporary Chinese dynasties. In the last one hundred years, a great amount of researches on the Khitan history have been done by the Chinese, Japanese and the Western scholars. Most of the contributions were about the dynastic history of the Khitan. With regards to the pre-dynastic Khitan history, however, much less attentions have been paid to it.

Two specialized works on the pre-dynastic Khitan came from the Japanese scholars: Matsui, Hitoshi, "Kittan bokko shi (History of the rise of the Khitan)"³⁸ written in 1915, and Otagi, Matsuo, *Kittan kodai shi no kenkyu (Studies on the Ancient History of the Khitan)*³⁹ published in 1959. The former briefly describes the five hundred years history of the pre-dynastic Khitan from the angle of the Khitan foreign relations, especially their relations with the Tang China; and emphatically analyses the external reasons, which profoundly affected the rise of the Khitan. It does not, however, attempt to investigate the origin and ethnic identity of the Khitan, and the internal elements, which facilitated the rise of the Khitan. The latter discusses the early history of the Khitan by investigating the tribal organization of the Khitan. Nevertheless, it does not make any attempt to approach other aspects of the pre-dynastic Khitan, such as the ethnic origin, the economic basis, the foreign relations, etc.

"The early Western historians of China paid almost no attention to the Liao",⁴⁰ still less to its pre-dynastic history. Since the end of the 1940s, some pages about the pre-dynastic Khitan in some massive work have appeared in the Western languages. They are, however, more or less at the introductory level. Wittfogel, Karl and Feng, Chia-sheng (Feng, Jiasheng), *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907-1125)*,⁴¹ published in 1949, is an important work on the history of the Khitan established Liao Dynasty. It systematically analyzes almost every aspect of the Liao society in detail. But concerning the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan, it contains only some introductions to the ethnic origin, the social organization, the economic life, etc. scattered in its various classified sections.

³⁸ Matsui, Hitoshi, "Kittan bokko shi", *Mansen chiri-rekishi kenkyu hokoku*, 1 (1915), pp. 137-294; translated into Chinese by Liu, Fengzhu, in *Minzu Shi Yiwenji (A Collection of Translated Papers on Ethnic Histories)*, no. 10, 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji et al. 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 93-141.

³⁹ Otagi, Matsuo, *Kittan kodai shi no kenkyu* (Kyoto, 1959); translated into Chinese by Xing, Fuli (Huhhot, 1988).

⁴⁰ Franke & Twitchett eds., 1994, p. 669.

⁴¹ Wittfogel & Feng, *History of Chinese Society: Liao (907-1125)* (Philadelphia, 1949).

Franke, Herbert and Twitchett, Denis eds., *Alien Regimes and Border States, The Cambridge History of China 6*⁴², devotes an eighteen pages long section to the pre-dynastic Khitan written by Twitchett, Denis and Tietze, Klaus-Peter. It provides a brief description of the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan based on a review of the Khitan's political relations with the Chinese dynasties, the Türks, and the Uighurs.⁴³ It also gives an analysis on the background of the Khitan's rise to power. Sinor, Denis edited *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*⁴⁴ contains a brief introduction to the pre-dynastic Khitan written by Franke, Herbert,⁴⁵ including the tribal history, religion and customs, and language and script.

Even so, Jennifer Holmgren donated two interesting papers on the issue of the Khitan kinship relations and system of succession to leadership in the 1980s: "Marriage, kinship, and succession under the Ch'i-tan rulers of the Liao dynasty (907-1125)"⁴⁶ and "Yeh-lü, Yao-liao and Ta-ho: Views of the hereditary prerogative in early Khitan leadership".⁴⁷

Great part of contribution to the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan were made by the Chinese historians, who study the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan respectively in a variety of aspects, such as, ethnic origin, economic development, tribal organization, social development, foreign relations, historical geography, etc. However, the researches they did are comparatively rich in the fields of ethnic origin, tribal organization, social development, while relatively poor in economic development, foreign relations, and historical geography.

Chen, Shu's monograph, *Qidan Shi Lunzheng Gao (A Study on the History of the Khitan)*,⁴⁸ published in 1948, is a significant and an epoch-making work on the history of the Khitan. It gives a wide coverage on the Khitan's pre-dynastic history, investigating the composition of the Khitan people, the origin and organization of two tribal confederations of the Khitan in their pre-dynastic period, the pattern of leadership succession, and the background of founding the Khitan state. Another monograph did by Shu, Fen on the history of the Khitan Liao Dynasty in 1984, *Liao Shi Gao (A History of the Liao)*,⁴⁹ also spends three chapters in describing the general situation of the pre-dynastic Khitan. The more integrative

⁴² Franke & Twitchett, eds., *Alien Regimes and Border States, The Cambridge History of China 6* (Cambridge, 1994)

⁴³ Twitchett & Tietze. "The Liao". In Franke & Twitchett eds., 1994, 43-153

⁴⁴ Sinor, Denis, ed., *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia* (Cambridge, 1990).

⁴⁵ Franke. "The forest peoples of Manchuria: Kitans and Jurchens". In Sinor, ed., 1990. 400-23.

⁴⁶ Holmgren, Jennifer, "Marriage, kinship, and succession under the Ch'i-tan rulers of the Liao dynasty (907-1125)", *T'oung Pao*, 72 (1986), pp. 44-91.

⁴⁷ Holmgren, Jennifer, "Yeh-lü, Yao-liao and Ta-ho: Views of the hereditary prerogative in early Khitan leadership", *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 34 (Canberra, 1986), pp. 37-81.

⁴⁸ Chen, Shu, *Qidan Shi Lunzheng Gao* (Beijing, 1948).

⁴⁹ Shu, Fen, *Liaoshi Gao* (Wuhan, 1984).

and concise work is Zhang, Zhengming's *Qidan Shilue (A Brief History of the Khitan)*,⁵⁰ in which one chapter of the brief history of the pre-dynastic Khitan includes. In this chapter, the ethnic origin, the economic life, and the tribal organization of the Khitan are emphatically discussed.

In addition to the above comprehensive surveys, there are also many research papers, which deal with some specific subjects in the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan, have been done by the Chinese scholars.

The most influential works in concerning the origin and ethnic affiliation of the Khitan, the most debatable issue in the field of the pre-dynastic Khitan studies, are Fang, Zhuangyou's "Qidan minzu kao (A textual research on the Khitan people)"⁵¹ published in 1930, and Feng, Jiasheng's "Qidan minghao kaoshi (The origin of the name Khitan)" first published in 1933 and is reprinted in his collection of works, *Feng Jiasheng Lunzhu Jicui*.⁵² Through comparative linguistic studies, Fang, Zhuangyou firmly believes that the Khitan were the descendants of the Xianbei, and belonged to a type of Mongoloid in racial differentiation; while Feng, Jiasheng maintains in more detail that the Khitan were the descendants of the Yuwen who were a branch of the Xianbei, according to the historical facts and geographical location of the Khitan, which are recorded in the historical sources. Based on Fang, Zhuangyou and Feng, Jiasheng's studies, further researches have been made by later Chinese historians and archaeologists. Added weight is given to Fang, Zhuangyou's opinion by Yi, Linzhen's belief that the Khitan belong to the typical Mongoloid, and further claims that the Khitan language was a direct descendant of the Xianbei language in his essay "Zhongguo beifang minzu yu Menggu zu zuyuan (The northern minorities of China and the origin of Mongol)".⁵³ Besides, from archaeological point of view, Zhu, Hong also proves this assertion in his article "Qidan zu de renzhong leixing jiqi xiangguan wenti (The racial type of the Khitan and its related problems)".⁵⁴ However, Jing, Ai accepts Feng, Jiasheng's opinion, points out in "Qidan de qiyuan yu zushu (The origin and ethnic affiliation of the Khitan)" that the Khitan were the output of the Xianbei assimilated with the Xiongnu.⁵⁵ In addition to the above two main

⁵⁰ Zhang, Zhengming, *Qidan Shilue* (Beijing, 1979).

⁵¹ Fang, Zhuangyou, "Qidan minzu kao", *Nu Shida Xueshu Jikan*, 1: 2&3 (1930). Repr. in: Yang, Jialuo 1973, pp. 5-106

⁵² Feng, Jiasheng, "Qidan minghao kaoshi", *Yanjing Xuebao*, 13 (1933). Repr. in: *Feng Jiasheng Lunzhu Jicui* (Beijing, 1987)

⁵³ Yi, Linzhen, "Zhongguo beifang minzu yu Menggu zu zuyuan", *Zhongguo Menggushi Xuehui Chengli Dahui Jinian Jikan* (1979), pp. 51-74.

⁵⁴ Zhu, Hong, "Qidan zu de renzhong leixing jiqi xiangguan wenti", *Nei Menggu Daxue xuebao*, 2 (1991), pp. 36-41.

⁵⁵ Jing, Ai, "Qidan de qiyuan yu zushu", *Shixue Jikan*, 2 (1984). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 19-23, 71.

viewpoints, Ji, Shi maintains that the Khitan were descendants of the Duan tribes of the Xianbei in his work "Qidan guohao jie (An explanation to the Khitan's state name)";⁵⁶ while Zhao, Zhenji believes that the Khitan were descendants of Kebineng in his monograph, *Qidan Zuxi Yuanliu Kao (The Source of the Khitan's Genealogy)*.⁵⁷

On the tribal organization of the Khitan in their pre-dynastic period, the most important contributions are Cai, Meibiao's "Qidan de buluo zuzhi he guojia de chansheng (The Khitan's tribal organization and their state founding)",⁵⁸ and Sun, Jinji's "Qidan buluo zuzhi fazhan bianhua chutan (A preliminary study on the development of the Khitan's tribal organization)".⁵⁹

Concerning the system of leadership succession of the Khitan in their pre-dynastic period, Zhang, Qufei's "Guanyu qidan hanwei de chengxi zhidu (On the Khitan system of succession to leadership)"⁶⁰ is the only achievement on this issue. However, the three influential works on the Khitan system of succession, Chen, Shu's "Qidan shixuan kao (A textual research on the hereditary election of the Khitan)",⁶¹ Yang, Zhijiu's "Abaoji jiwei kaobian (A textual reserach on Abaoji' s accession to the throne)",⁶² and Yao, Congwu's "Suo Liao chao Qidan ren de shixuan zhidu (Studies on the Khitan system of hereditary election in the Liao dynasty)",⁶³ give some analyses on the Khitan system of succession to leadership in their pre-dynastic period.

Studies in the field of Khitan foreign relations in their pre-dynastic period seem quite poor. The only available significant studies are in Wang, Riwei's "Qidan yu Huihe guanxi kao (A textual research on the relationship between the Khitan and Uighurs)"⁶⁴ published in 1935; and Li, Futong's "Huihe yu Liao

⁵⁶ Ji, Shi, "Qidan guohao jie", *Shehui Kexue Jikan*, 1 (1983). Repr. in: Sun, L Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 80-85, 182.

⁵⁷ Zhao, Zhenji, *Qidan Zuxi Yuanliu Kao* (Taibei, 1992).

⁵⁸ Cai, Meibiao, "Qidan de buluo zuzhi he guojia de chansheng", *Lishi Yanjiu*, 5-6 (1964). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 965-994.

⁵⁹ Sun, Jinji, "Qidan buluo zuzhi de fazhan bianhua chutan", *Shehui Kexue Jikan*, 4 (1981). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 995-999.

⁶⁰ Zhang, Qufei, "Guanyu Qidan hanwei de chengxi zhidu", *Lishi Jiaoxue*, 8 (1964). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1000-1001.

⁶¹ Chen, Shu, "Qidan shixuan kao", *Shi Yu Suo Jikan*, 5 (1947). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1002-1009.

⁶² Yang, Zhijiu, "Abaoji jiwei kaobian (A textual reserach on Abaoji' s accession to the throne)", *Shi Yu Suo Jikan* 17 (1948). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 217-229.

⁶³ Yao, Congwu, "Suo Liao chao Qidan ren de shixuan zhidu", *Wen Shi Zhe Xuebao* (Taiwan) 6 (December 1954). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), 1010-1099.

⁶⁴ Wang, Riwei, "Qidan yu Huihe guanxi kao", *Yugong*, 4: 8 (1935). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 812-820.

jianguo de guanxi (The Relation between the Uighurs and the founding of the Liao state)"⁶⁵ published in 1968.

On the Social development of the pre-dynastic Khitan, Yang, Zhijiu's "Shi shiji Qidan shehui fazhan de yige lunku (An outline of the social development of the Khitan in the 10th century)"⁶⁶ devotes a great part of the coverage to describe the situation of the pre-dynastic Khitan's social development. Furthermore, Tuo, Feng's "Dui si shiji mo dao shi shiji chu Qidan shehui lishi de fenxi (A historical analysis on the Khitan society from the end of the 4th century to the beginning of the 10th century)"⁶⁷ and Sun, Jinji & Bai, Xinhua's "Si zhi shi shiji Qidan shehui de fazhan (The social development of the Khitan from the 4th to 10th centuries)"⁶⁸ also reveal the social history of the pre-dynastic Khitan from different angles.

On the historical geography of the pre-dynastic Khitan, two interesting contributions were both made in late 1980s: Sun, Jinji & Zhang, Bozhong's "Qidan zaoqi diyu kao (A textural research on the Khitan territory in its early period)"⁶⁹ and Feng Yongqian's "Tangdai Qidan dudu fudi kao (On the location of the government-general of Khitan in the period of the Tang dynasty)".⁷⁰

Finally, on the material culture of the early Khitan, Zhang, Bozhong's archaeological report "Qidan zaoqi wenhua tansuo (A study on the early culture of the Khitan)"⁷¹ is the only available research in this field. Through the analysis on the ceramic wares excavated from the seven Khitan tombs found in Inner Mongolia and Liaoning in 1980s, the author believes that these Khitan tombs dated to the early stage of the Khitan history, from the Northern Qi to the beginning of the Liao. He also claims the early culture of the Khitan directly inherited from the Xianbei culture.

⁶⁵ Li, Futong, *Huihe yu Liao Jianguo de Guanxi* (Taipei, 1968).

⁶⁶ Yang, Zhijiu, "Shi shiji Qidan shehui fazhan de yige lunku", *Nankai Daxue Xuebao*, 1 (1956). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1222-1229.

⁶⁷ Tuo, Feng, "Dui si shiji mo dao shi shiji chu Qidan shehui lishi de fenxi", *Neimeng Shiyuan Xuebao*, 2 (1959). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1230-1236.

⁶⁸ Sun, Jinji & Bai, Xinhua, "Si zhi shi shiji Qidan shehui de fazhan", *Heilongjiang Wenwu Congkan*, 3 (1983). Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1237-1239, 1236.

⁶⁹ Sun, Jinji & Zhang, Bozhong, "Qidan zaoqi diyu kao", *Liao Jin Qidan Nüzhen Shi Yanjiu*, 1 (1986); pp. 26-28.

⁷⁰ Feng, Yongqian, "Tangdai Qidan dudu fudi kao" in *Liao Jin Shi Lunji* no. 4 (Beijing, 1989), pp. 116-124.

⁷¹ Zhang, Bozhong, "Qidan zaoqi wenhua tansuo", *Kaogu*, 2 (1984). Repr. In: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 2), pp. 150-153.

CHAPTER 2. THE HISTORICAL DATABASE

2.1 Introduction to the Sources on the Pre-dynastic Khitan

Concerning the material of my research subject, most of the historical sources about the Khitan in this period of time are fragmentally documented in the Chinese twenty-four dynastic histories from the *Wei Shu* (covering the period of the Northern Wei Dynasty, 386-556) to the *Wudai Shi* (covering the period of the Five Dynasties, 907-960), which are really basic sources of information, and many other Chinese historical documents, since the Khitan people did not have their own written language at the pre-dynastic stage,

My research field is limited mainly to the period of the pre-dynastic Khitan, so that the material I have collected is mainly within this time frame. The material my research needs to rely on are scattered throughout the following historical books and documents: the *Wei Shu* (*Dynastic History of the Northern Wei Dynasty*), *Bei Shi* (*Dynastic History of the Northern Barbarians*), *Sui Shu* (*Dynastic History of the Sui Dynasty*), *Jiu Tangshu* (*Old Dynastic History of the Tang Dynasty*), *Xin Tangshu* (*New Dynastic History of the Tang Dynasty*), *Liao Shi* (*Dynastic History of the Khitan Liao Dynasty*), *Qidan Guozhi* (*The Historical Record of the Khitan State*), *Zizhi Tongjian*, and *Tong Dian*. In addition, some other historical sources which relate to the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan were also needed, such as the *Shi Ji*, *Hou Hanshu* (*Dynastic History of the Later Han Dynasty*), *Sanguo Zhi* (*Dynastic History of the Three Kingdoms*), *Jin Shu* (*Dynastic History of the Jin Dynasty*), *Zhou Shu* (*Dynastic History of the Northern Zhou Dynasty*), *Jiu & Xin Wudai Shi* (*Old and New Dynastic Histories of the Five Dynasties*), *Quan Tangwen*, *Cefu Yuangui* and *Wenyuan Yinghua*. The sources I selected are all the Zhonghua Shuju editions except for the *Qidan Guozhi* (the edition of Shanghai Ancient Books Press, 1985), because these editions have been carefully collated and punctuated by the Chinese specialists. Therefore, these editions (including the *Qidan Guozhi*, the edition of Shanghai Ancient Books Press 1985) are believed relatively reliable, and easier to read and understand.

The methodology I employed in doing the work of material arrangement was putting the original texts in chronological sequence in accordance with historical events with short titles for each of the events, and then the English translations and technical commentaries have been followed separately. The material I have selected covers the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan, from 388 to 907. Additionally, a small part of sources, which in regards the origin of the Khitan, has been also quoted for drawing an integrated picture of the pre-dynastic Khitan's

historical course in its entirety. In dealing with each particular historical event, the principle is that the source, which has been selected, has more historical value than others. It is very important to compare different books or documents in the first place, and then choose one through comprehensive investigation. Based upon this principle, when records are the same, I have selected the one with more detail in dating time and describing the process of the event; when records are different, I have listed them one by one, and added some technical notes if necessary. The material on the Khitan before the period of the Tang Dynasty has been mainly quoted from the *Wei Shu*, *Bei Shi*, and *Sui Shu*; the material on the Khitan during the period of the Tang Dynasty has been mainly quoted from the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu*, and *Zizhi Tongjian*; on the tribal organization, the material has been mainly quoted from the *Liao Shi* and *Qidan Guozhi*. Some additional sources have been quoted as supplementary materials.

The aim of this work is to present a collection of systematic and relatively entire basic sources on the pre-dynastic Khitan, and even though it may prove inadequate in some specific research field. It should be useful for scholars in the field of the Khitan studies. Besides, this work is also to make Chinese-language research material on the pre-dynastic Khitan known to the Western world. The following are brief introductions to some of the principle historical books concerning the Khitan studies.

The *Zizhi Tongjian*. The *Zizhi Tongjian* is a famous classic chronicle in Chinese history. The great historian, Sima Guang (1019-1086) compiled this work by consulting a variety of historical materials (two hundred and twenty-two kinds of miscellaneous histories besides official histories), and cooperating with his chief assistants Liu Shu, Liu Ban and Fan Zuyu. This work covers Chinese history from the Warring States to the Five Dynasties (403 B.C.-A.D.959), taking nineteen years to finish. The Zhonghua Shuju edition contains textual criticism made by Hu Sanxing of the Yuan Dynasty besides its main body.

The text of volume 107 to volume 269 records the history from the Northern Wei to the early period of the Five Dynasties of China. It also includes some fragmentary information on the ethnic peoples around China Proper that had more or less relations with the successive Chinese dynasties in this period. It contains several accounts of records on the Khitan, which are quite valuable for the Khitan studies.

The collation and punctuation of the Zhonghua Shuju edited *Zizhi Tongjian* was completed by Qi Sihe, Gu Jiegang, Nie Chongqi and another nine scholars. It is based on the Yuan printed Hu (Sanxing) annotated edition. This work has also referred to the *Cefu Yuangui* written by Zhang Yu, which has collated the Song and Ming editions by consulting the previous achievements in the Song, Yuan and Ming editions.

The *Jiu Tangshu* (Old Dynastic History of the Tang Dynasty). The *Jiu Tangshu* was compiled officially in the Hou Jin (the Later Jin 939-946) of the Five Dynasties, which is the earliest historical document recording the history of the Tang Dynasty. Its original name was "*Tangshu*". It is called "*Jiu Tangshu*" for distinguishing it from the Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi edited "*Xin Tangshu*" completed in the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127). The work is divided into three parts: the *Imperial Annals*, *Records of Institutions*, *Biographies* and *Descriptions*. There are two hundred volumes altogether.

The times when the editors of the *Jiu Tangshu* lived was relatively close to the period of the Tang, so they had opportunities to get a vast amount of historical data on the Tang Dynasty, particularly about the earlier period. However, information on the later period of the Tang is relatively scarce, on account of historical reasons.

The *Jiu Tangshu* is detailed in describing historical events, and rich in preserving historical sources. It is so convenient for readers to review the whole course and details of the historical facts that it has drawn attention from scholars for a long time. For instance, the section on the Tang Dynasty in the *Zizhi Tongjian* has been mainly adopted from it, because of its more detailed and clearer records of historical stories.

The connection between the pre-dynastic Khitan and Tang mainly happened in the first half of the Tang Dynasty. The historical data on the pre-dynastic Khitan, which have been kept in the *Jiu Tangshu*, are relatively rich and minute. For researchers in the field of the Khitan studies, the *Jiu Tangshu* is one of the most important historical sources.

The collation and punctuation of the Zhonghua Shuju edited *Jiu Tangshu* is based on the Juying Zhai edition as the working edition, comparing it with the following five editions: (1). The incomplete Song edition in the Shaoxing period of the Southern Song Dynasty; (2). Wenren Quan edition in the Jiajing period of the Ming Dynasty; (3). Yingwu Dian edition in the Qianlong period of the Qing Dynasty; (4). Zhejiang Shuju edition in the Tongzhi period of the Qing Dynasty; (5). Zuogu Tang edition in the Tongzhi period of the Qing Dynasty. In addition, this work has consulted the *Tang Huiyao*, *Taiping Yulan* and *Cefu Yuangui*. This work was completed by scholars of the Department of History, Department of Chinese, and the Institute of History and Geography of Fudan University.

The *Xin Tangshu* (New Dynastic History of the Tang Dynasty). The *Xin Tangshu* was compiled officially in the period of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), edited by Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi. It contains ten volumes of *Imperial Annals*, fifty volumes of *Records of Institutions*, fifteen volumes of *Tables* and one hundred and fifty volumes of *Biographies* and *Descriptions*. There is two hundred and twenty-five volumes altogether.

In comparison with the *Jiu Tangshu*, the editors of the *Xin Tangshu* take more seriously the compilation of the *Records of Institutions* and *Tables*. It has been largely supplemented by some new information in content. In addition, the *Xin Tangshu* has preserved some material on the later period of the Tang Dynasty that the *Jiu Tangshu* is short in, especially in the *Biographies of personages* in the later period of the Tang. Furthermore the records on ethnic groups in the *Xin Tangshu* are richer and more detailed than in the *Jiu Tangshu*.

The collation and punctuation of the Zhonghua Shuju edited *Xin Tangshu* is based on the Baina edition as the working edition, comparing it with the Shiliu Hang edition of the Northern Song, Shi Hang edition of the Southern Song, the Jigu Ge edition, the Dian edition and Zhejiang Shuju edition. This work was completed by scholars of Huadong Normal University, Institute of History and Geography of Fudan University.

The *Liao Shi* (*Dynastic History of the Khitan Liao Dynasty*). The *Liao Shi* was compiled officially in the Mongol Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), edited by Tuotuo *et al.* The compilation of this version of *Liao Shi* was based upon the Yelü Yan edited *Shilu* (*Veritable Records*) completed in the Liao Dynasty and the Chen Daren edited *Liao Shi* completed in the Jurchen Jin Dynasty, consulting with the *Zizhi Tongjian*, *Qidan Guozhi* and the *descriptions of the Khitan* in the previous dynastic histories. It contains thirty volumes of *Imperial Annals*, thirty-two volumes of *Records of Institutions*, eight volumes of *Tables*, forty-eight volumes of *Biographies and Descriptions* and one volume of *Glossary of National Language*. There are one hundred and sixteen volumes altogether.

The *Liao Shi* was not completed until 1343, largely because many scholars had been objecting to compiling a standard official history for the barbarian Khitan. At that time the regime of the Mongol Yuan was in a precarious situation, so that the composition of the *Liao Shi* took only less than one year without elaborate proofreading and textual criticism. Because of the hastiness and coarseness, the *Liao Shi* is renowned for its inferiority with technical errors, lack of precision, even overlaps and self-contradictions. However it is still valued for its data on tribal life and traditions. Moreover, because both the Yelü Yan edited *Shilu* and the Chen Daren edited *Liao Shi* were not handed down, the Tuotuo edited *Liao Shi* has come into being as the only one historical book that has systematic and integrated records on the Khitan history.

The work of collation and punctuation of the Zhonghua Shuju Press edited *Liao Shi* was undertaken by specialists of the Khitan studies, Feng Jiasheng and Chen Shu. It is based on the Baina edition as the working edition, and has been compared with the Qianlong edition, the Nanjian edition, the Beijian edition and the Daoguang edition. Additionally, this work has referred to some other historical sources: the *Cefu Yuanguai*, *Zizhi Tongjian*, *Xu Zizhi Tongjian*

Changbian, Jiu & Xin Tangshu, Jiu & Xin Wudai Shi, Song Shi, Jin Shi, Qidan Guizhi and *Liao Wenhui*. Some of the previous achievements of textual criticism on the *Liao Shi* have also been consulted.

2.2. The Textual Material

1. Before the 2nd Century B.C.

(1). Legendary story 1

Qidan Guozhi Preface: *The Whole Course of the Khitan's Origin*:

後有一主，號曰迺呵，此主持一髑髏，在窮廬中覆之以氈，人不得見。國有大事，則殺白馬灰牛以祭，始變人形，出視事，已，即入窮廬，復為髑髏。因國人窺視之，失其所在。復有一主，號曰呵，戴野豬頭，披豬皮，居窮廬中，有事則出，退復隱入窮廬如故。後因其妻竊其豬皮，遂失其夫，莫知所如。次復一主，號曰晝里昏呵，惟養羊二十口，日食十九，留其一焉，次日復有二十口，日如之。是三主者，皆有治國之能名。¹

There was a chief called Naihe. This chief was nothing but a skull hidden under a rug in a round felt tent, so that he was invisible. Only when there was something serious had happened in his state, a white horse and a gray ox were sacrificed to him, then he took on a human figure, and came out to deal with the affairs. After the affairs had been settled, he returned to the tent and became a skull again. He disappeared, for his countrymen peeped at him. Then there was another chief called Waihe who was also living in a round felt tent. He wore a boar's head and was clad in pigskin. When there was an action he came out, then he retired and hid himself again. Later it happened that his wife stole his pigskin; he abandoned her and nobody knew where he went. Then there was another one called Zhouli Hunhe. He had raised twenty sheep. Each day he ate nineteen and had only one left, but in the following day there were twenty again. These three chiefs were well known for their abilities in running their state.²

(2). Legendary story 2

Liao Shi vol 37, *Account of Geographic part 1, Yongzhou*:

有木葉山，上建契丹始祖廟，奇首可汗在南廟，可敦在北廟，繪二聖并八子神像。相傳有神人乘白馬，自馬盂山浮土河而東，有天女駕青牛車由平地松林泛潢河而下，至木葉山，二

¹ *QDGZ* Preface. 1-2.

² This account of English translation is quoted from Franke, Herbert. "The forest peoples of Manchuria: Kitans and Jurchens".. In Sinor ed., 1990, pp. 405-406.

水合流，相遇為配偶，生八子。其後族屬漸盛，分為八部。每行軍及春秋時祭，必用白馬青牛，示不忘本云³。

There was the Muye Mountain, on which temples for the earliest ancestors of the Khitan were built. The Qishou Khaghan was (worshipped) in the southern temple and (his wife) Kedun in the northern temple. The likenesses of these two sage rulers and their eight sons were modeled and painted in the temples. An old tradition handed down from antiquity relates that a divine man riding a white horse floated along the Tu River (modern Laoha River) from the Mayu Mountain to the east. A heavenly maiden riding a cart drawn by a gray ox floated down the Huang River (modern Shira Muren River) from the region of Pingdi Songlin. On reaching the Muye Mountain, where the two rivers joined courses, they met and mated. They had eight sons. Later, their descendants gradually multiplied, and split up into eight tribes. In each military undertaking and in the seasonal sacrifices of a spring and an autumn they had to use a white horse and a gray ox (as sacrificed animals) to show what their origin was not forgotten.

2. The 2nd Century B.C.

Xianbei's being defeated by the Xiongnu

(1). *Hou Han shu* vol. 90, *Description of the Wuhuan and Xianbei*:

鮮卑者，亦東胡之支也，別依鮮卑山，故因為號焉。漢初，亦為冒頓所破，遠竄遼東塞外 ... ⁴

The Xianbei who were a branch of the Donghu, relied upon the Xianbei Mountains. Therefore, they were called the Xianbei. At the beginning of the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), (they) were defeated by Maodun, and then fled in disorder to Liaodong beyond the northern border of China Proper ...

(2). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

契丹，本東胡種，其先為匈奴所破，保鮮卑山。⁵

The Khitan were of Donghu origin. Their ancestors were defeated by the Xiongnu, and then sought refuge in the Xianbei Mountains.

3. A.D. 25-220

³ *LS* 37. 445-446.

⁴ *HHS* 90. 2985.

⁵ *XTS* 219. 6267.

Defeated Xiongnu's integration into the Xianbei

Hou Hanshu vol. 90, *Description of the Wuhuan and Xianbei*:

和帝永元中，大將軍竇憲遣右校尉耿夔擊破匈奴，北單于逃走，鮮卑因此轉徙據其地。匈奴餘種留者尚有十萬餘落，皆自號鮮卑，鮮卑由此漸盛。⁶

During the Yongyuan period (89-105) of emperor He's reign, the chief general Dou Xian sent troops to attack the Xiongnu and destroy them. The northern Shanyu fled even further to the north. The Xianbei took advantage the disintegration of the Northern Xianbei to occupy the territory of them. The remnants of the northern Xiongnu, 100,000 tents, declared themselves the Xianbei. From then on, the Xianbei became more prosperous.

4. The end of the 2nd Century

Rising at the end of the Han Dynasty

Jin Shi vol. 67, *Biography of the Xi King Huilibao* records:

庫莫奚契丹起於漢末，盛於隋唐之間，俱強為鄰國，合并為君臣，歷八百年，相為終始。⁷

Both the Kumo Xi and the Khitan were rising at the end of the Han Dynasty, and becoming more prosperous during the Sui/Tang period. Both of them were strong as neighbors, alternately became monarchs and vassals. (Such a situation) had lasted for over eight hundred years. They coexisted from the beginning to the end.

5. A.D. 233-236

Kebineng's being killed

Xin Tangshu vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

魏青龍中，部酋(柯)比能稍桀驁，為幽州刺史王雄所殺，眾遂微，逃潢水之南，黃龍之北。⁸

During the Qinglong period (233-237) of the Cao Wei, the tribal chieftain (Ke) Bineng, who was somewhat tyrannical and unrestrained, was killed by the prefect of Youzhou, Wang Xiong. The tribesmen were on the decline and fled (to the region) south of the Huang River and north of Huanglong.

Sanguo Zhi vol. 30, *Description of the Wuwan, Xianbei and Eastern Barbarians*:

⁶ *HHS* 90. 2986.

⁷ *JSI* 67. 1588.

⁸ *XTS* 219. 6167.

至三年中，雄遣勇士韓龍刺殺(柯)比能，更立其弟。⁹

In the third year of (Qinglong) (235), (Wang) Xiong sent a warrior Han Long to kill (Ke) Bineng, and enthroned his brother.

6. The 3rd Century

(1). Ancestors of the Yuwen

Zhoushu vol. 1, *Account of Emperor Wendi* :

其先出自炎帝神農氏，為黃帝所滅，子孫遁居朔野。有葛烏菟者，雄武多謀略，鮮卑慕之，奉以為主，遂總十二部落，世為大人。其后曰普回，因狩獵得玉璽三，有文曰皇帝璽，普回心異之，以為天授。其俗謂天曰宇，謂君曰文，因號宇文國，并以為氏焉。

普回子莫那，自陰山南徙，始居遼西，是曰獻侯，為魏舅生之國。九世至侯豆歸，為慕容晃所滅。¹⁰

(The Yuwen's) ancestors were descended from the Shennong family of emperor Yan. Later, they were defeated by emperor Huang, and then his sons and grandsons fled to and settled in the northern desert. (A man) named Gewutu who was respected by the Xianbei people was chosen to be their chief, controlling over twelve tribes for generations, because of his braveness and astuteness. His descendant was called Puhui. Puhui got three jade seals with words "emperor's seal" when he was hunting. He was surprised and thought that (the seals) might have been granted from the Heaven. According to their tradition, the Heaven was called *yu* and the supreme ruler was called *wen*. Therefore, (their state) was called the *yuwen* state. (The *yuwen*) was also used as a surname.

A son of Puhui was called Mona, who migrated south from the Yin Mountains. From then on, he settled in Liaoxi. He was marquis of Xian (the noble title was granted by the Cao Wei court). (The State of Yuwen) had been a vassal state under the Cao Wei. After nine generations until (the period) of Houdougui, (the mass) of the Yuwen were destroyed by Murong Huang.

Wei Shu vol. 103, *Biography of Yuwen Mohuai of Xiongnu*:

匈奴宇文莫槐，出於遼東塞外，其先，南單于之遠屬也，世為東部大人。其語與鮮卑頗異。人皆翦髮而留其頂上，以為首飾，長過數寸則截短之。婦女披長襦及足，而無裳焉。秋收烏頭為毒藥，以射禽獸。¹¹

⁹ SGZ 30. 839.

¹⁰ ZS 1. 1.

¹¹ WS 103. 2304.

Yuwen Mohuai of the Xiongnu was from Liaodong, the region beyond the northern border of China Proper. His ancestor was a remote relative of the southern Shanyu. (The Yuwen) had been the chief of the eastern section (of the Xianbei) for many generations. The (Yuwen)'s language differed widely from the Xianbei's. (The Yuwen) people all had shaved hair, but the hair on top of the head was left as a decoration. When the hair was over some *cun* long, it would be cut short. The women had long robes, which draped from their shoulders to their feet, but (they) did not wear skirts. When autumn came, they collected Wutou as poison, and used it to shoot birds and beasts.

(2). Yuwen's being divided into the Kumo Xi and Khitan

Liao Shi vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*:

蓋炎帝之裔曰葛烏菟者，世雄朔陲，後為冒頓可汗所襲，保鮮卑山以居，號鮮卑氏。既而慕容燕破之，析其部曰宇文，曰庫莫奚，曰契丹。契丹之名昉見於此。¹²

Emperor Yan's descendant was called Gewutu who had been powerful in the frontier for generations. Later, they were defeated by the Maodun khaghan, and then sought refuge in the Xianbei Mountain for protection. This is where the name Xianbei comes from. After having been destroyed by Murong Yan, they were broken up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and the Khitan. Until then the name Khitan was found.

鮮卑葛烏菟之後曰普回。普回有子莫那，自陰山南徙，始居遼西。九世為慕容晃所滅，鮮卑眾散為宇文氏，或為庫莫奚，或為契丹。¹³

A descendant of Gewutu of the Xianbei was called Puhui. Puhui had a son Mona, who migrated south from the Yin Mountains and was the first to settle in Liaoxi. After nine generations (the mass of Xianbei), upon being destroyed by Murong Huang, broke up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and the Khitan.

(3). **Origin of the Khitan**

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Kumo Xi*:

庫莫奚國之先，東部宇文之別種也。初為慕容元真所破，遺落者竄匿松漠之間。¹⁴

¹² *LS* 63. 949.

¹³ *Idem.* 951.

The ancestors of the Kumo Xi state were of a branch of the eastern section of the Yuwen. Previously they were destroyed by Murong Yuanzhen. The remnants of their people fled to the region of Songmo.

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

契丹國，在庫莫奚東，異種同類，俱竄於松漠之間。¹⁵

The Khitan state was located east of the Kumo Xi. They were of different origins but belonged to the same ethnic stock. Both of them fled to the region of Songmo.

7. A.D. 386-395

Splitting off from the Kumo Xi

(1). *Wei Shu* vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

契丹國，在庫莫奚東，異種同類，俱竄於松漠之間。登國中，國軍大破之，遂逃迸，與庫莫奚分背。¹⁶

The Khitan state was situated east of the Kumo Xi. They were of different origins but belonged to the same ethnic stock, and fled to the region of Songmo together. During the period of Dengguo (386-395), they were severely defeated by the imperial troops. Therefore, they (the Khitan) fled in disorder and split off from the Kumo Xi.

(2). *Wei Shu* vol. 2, *Account of Emperor Taizu*:

三年五月癸亥，北征庫莫奚。六月，大破之，獲其四部雜畜十餘萬。¹⁷

On the Day of Guihai in the fifth month of the third year (of Dengguo) (388), (the emperor) launched a campaign against the Kumo Xi to the north. In the sixth month, (the Northern Wei) severely defeated them, capturing their four tribes with over one hundred thousand livestock from their four tribes.

(3). *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*:

契丹國，在庫莫奚東，異種同類，東部鮮卑之別支也，至是始自號契丹。¹⁸

¹⁴ *WS* 100. 2222.

¹⁵ *Idem*. 2223.

¹⁶ *Idem*. 2223.

¹⁷ *Idem* 2. 22.

¹⁸ *LS* 63. 951.

The Khitan state was situated east of the Kumo Xi. They were of different origins but belonged to the same ethnic stock, which was a branch of the eastern section of the Xianbei. Until now they for the first time called themselves the Khitan.

8. Around the 3rd Century

Ancient Xiongnu origin

Jiu Wudai Shi vol. 137, *Description of Foreign States* part 1, *the Khitan*:

契丹者，古匈奴之種也。代居遼澤之中，潢水南岸，南距榆關一千一百里，榆關距幽州七百里，本鮮卑之舊地也。¹⁹

The Khitan were of ancient Xiongnu origin. For generations, they inhabited the river basin of the Liao River that was south of the Huang River. (Their territory) was originally the old land of the Xianbei that was located one thousand and one hundred *li* south of the Yuguan Pass. The Yuguan Pass was situated seven hundred *li* from Youzhou.

9. A D 396-437

Location of the Khitan

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

經數十年，稍滋蔓，有部落於和龍之北數百里，多為寇盜。²⁰

After several decades, they multiplied somewhat and spread out. They had tribes, which were located several hundred *li* north of Helong (modern Chaoyang City of Liaoning Province), and frequently raiding borders.

In the *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy* and *Tong Dian* vol. 200, *Description of the Northern Barbarians* part 7, the Khitan, there are the same description.

10. A.D. 440-450

Tributary activities

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

真君以來，求朝獻，歲貢名馬。²¹

¹⁹ *JWDS* 137. 1827.

²⁰ *WS* 100. 2223.

²¹ *Idem*.

Since the period of Zhenjun (r. 440-449), (the Khitan) had asked for paying tributes to the (Northern Wei) court, and then annually presented famous steeds.

11. A.D. 465-471

Ancient eight tribes and tributary activities

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

獻祖時，使莫弗賀何辰奉獻，得班嚮於諸國之末 ... 悉萬丹部，何大何部，伏弗郁部，羽陵部，日連部，匹絜部，黎部，吐六于部等，各以其名文皮入獻天府，遂求為常。皆得交市於和龍，密雲之間，貢獻不絕。²²

During the period of emperor Xianzu (r. 466-470), when the Mofuhe named Hechen came to pay tributes, (the Khitan) were entertained at dinner and classified among the last of the (vassal) states ... All the tribes the Xiwandan, Hedahe, Fufuyu, Yuling, Rilian, Pijie, Li and Tuliuyu presented famous steeds and high-quality fur to the (Northern Wei) court, and asked to regularize (this tributary system). All of the tribes were allowed to trade in the region between Helong and Miyun (modern Miyun County of Beijing City). (From then on), they presented tributes continually.

12. A.D. 479

Submission to the Northern Wei

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

太和三年，高句麗與蠕蠕謀，欲取地豆于以分之。契丹懼其侵軼，其莫弗賀勿于率其部落車三千乘，眾萬餘口，驅徙雜畜，求入內附，止於白狼水東。自此歲常朝貢。²³

In the third year of Taihe (479), the Koguryō and the Ruru schemed of capturing and carving up the territory of the Didouyu. The Khitan Mofuhe named Wuyu led his tribe to ask to submit to (the Northern Wei) with three thousand carriages, more than ten thousand people and numerous livestock, for fear of their invasion. They were settled in the east of Bailang River. From then on, they annually paid tributes.

In the *Bei Shi* vol. 94, *Description of the Khitan*, there is a same description. The *Liao Shi* and *Tong Dian* do not record this event.

13. A.D. 479-499

²² *Idem.*

²³ *Idem.* 2223-2224.

Being allowed to cross border for purchase of grain

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

後告饑，高祖矜之，聽其入關市糴。²⁴

When a famine broke out (in the area of Khitan), emperor Gaozu sympathized with them, allowing them to come across the border for buying in grain.

14. A.D. 500-534

Tributes and bestowals

Wei Shu vol. 100, *Description of the Khitan*:

及世宗，肅宗時，恒遣使貢方物。熙平中，契丹使人祖真等三十人還，靈太后以其俗嫁娶之際，以青毡為上服，人給青氈兩匹，賞其誠款之心，餘依舊式。朝貢至齊受禪常不絕。²⁵

Towards the time of emperor Shizong (r. 500-515) and emperor Suzong (r. 515-528), (the Khitan) frequently sent missions to present specialties. During the period of Xiping (516-518), when the Khitan envoy Zuzhen and thirty others were going back, empress Ling awarded two pieces of black felt to each of them for their wholehearted allegiance, Because it was part of their custom of using black felt as their first-class dress at weddings. The others were in accordance with old rites. Until the Qi took power, (the Khitan) never stopped paying tributes.

15. A.D. 550-577

Suffering an attack from the Northern Qi

Bei Shi vol. 94, *Description of the Khitan*:

天保四年九月，契丹犯塞，文宣帝親戎北伐... 帝親逾山嶺，奮擊大破之，虜十餘萬口，雜畜數十萬頭。所虜生口，皆分置諸州。其後復為突厥所逼，又以萬口寄於高麗。²⁶

In the ninth month of the fourth year of Tianbao (553), the Khitan mounted raids on the borders (of the Northern Qi). Emperor Wenxuan personally headed a punitive campaign against them to the north ... The emperor himself crossed the mountain range, launching a vigorous attack and defeated them severely, capturing more than a hundred thousand people and several hundred thousand

²⁴ *Idem.* 2224.

²⁵ *Idem.*

²⁶ *BS* 94. 3128.

animals of different kinds. Those captives were distributed among various prefectures (of the Northern Qi). On being harassed by the Türks, they temporarily resided with ten thousand families in the Koryö (Gaoli).

In the *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of genealogy*, there is an almost same description. The *Sui Shu* and *Tong Dian* do not record the event of being defeated by the Northern Qi.

16. The 3rd.-6th. Centuries

(1). Ancient eight tribes

Liao Shi vol. 32, *Account of Camping and Defending part 2 Tribes and Lineages part 1*:

部落曰部，氏族曰族 契丹故俗，分地而居，合族而處。²⁷

Tribes are called *bu* and lineages *zu*. According to the old custom of the Khitan, they settled down by dividing the land, and lived together by combining lineages.²⁸

古八部：

悉萬丹部；何大何部；伏弗郁部；羽陵部；日連部；匹絜部；黎部；吐六于部。²⁹

The ancient eight tribes:

The Xiwandan tribe; the Hedahe tribe; the Fufuyu tribe; the Yuling tribe; the Rilian tribe; the Pixie tribe; the Li tribe; the Tuliuyu tribe.

契丹之先，曰奇首可汗，生八子。其後族屬漸盛，分為八部，居松漠之間。今永州木葉山有契丹始祖廟，奇首可汗，可敦并八子像在焉。潢河之西，土河之北，奇首可汗故壤也。³⁰

The ancestor of the Khitan was called Qishou Khaghan who begot eight sons. Afterwards, the tribes gradually became more prosperous and split into eight tribes, which resided in the region of Songmo. The present Muye Mountain was located in Yongzhou. There was an earliest ancestral temple of the Khitan, where the portraits of Qishou Khaghan, Kedun and their eight sons were enshrined. (The region was located) west of the Huang River and north of the Tu River. It was the old land of Qishou Khaghan.

²⁷ *LS* 32. 376.

²⁸ This account of English translation is quoted from Wittfogel and Feng 1949, p. 84.

²⁹ *LS* 32. 377-378.

³⁰ *Idem.* 378.

生聚未幾，北齊見侵，掠男女十萬餘口。繼為突厥所逼，寄處高麗，不過萬家。部落離散，非復古八部矣。³¹

They had been increasing in population for a short time when they invaded the Northern Qi but lost by capture more than a hundred thousand men and women. Later, being pressed by the Türks, they temporarily resided in the Koryö where they numbered no more than ten thousand families. The tribes became scattered and were no longer the eight tribes of old.³²

(2). Customs and way of life

Liao Shi vol. 59, *Account of Finance and Economy* part 1:

契丹舊俗，其富以馬，其強以兵。縱馬於野，馳兵於民。有事而戰，騎介夫，卯命辰集。馬逐水草，人仰湏酪，挽強射生，以給日用，糗糧芻茭，道在是矣。以是制勝，所向無前。³³

In the ancient Khitan way of life their wealth consisted of horses and their strength of soldiers. The horses were released in the open country and the soldiers were demobilized among the people. Whenever a military campaign occurred, they were called to arms. The mounted archers and armed soldiers received their orders at the hour *mao* and assembled at the hour *chen*. The horses went after water and grass and men depended on kumiss. They bent the powerful bow and shot living animals in order to provide for their daily needs. They also had dried food and fodder. Such was their way of living. On account of this, they hold the upper hand and encountered no opposition whenever they went.³⁴

Liao Shi vol. 32, *Account of Camping and Defending* part 2:

大漠之間，多寒多風，畜牧畋漁以食，皮毛以衣，轉徙隨時，車馬為家。³⁵

Living in the frigid and windy Northern Desert, the Khitan people made animal husbandry, hunting and fishing their occupations, which could provide them (meat, fish and milk) for food, wool and hides for clothing. They used the horse-drawn cart for their shelters throughout the seasonal migrations.

17. A.D. 584-585

³¹ *Idem.* 376.

³² This account of English translation is quoted from Wittfogel and Feng 1949, pp. 85-86.

³³ *LS* 59. 923.

³⁴ This account of English translation is quoted from Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 126.

³⁵ *LS* 32. 373.

Submission to the Sui

Sui Shu vol. 84, *Description of the Khitan*:

開皇四年，率諸莫賀弗來謁。五年，悉其眾款塞，高祖納之，聽居其故地。³⁶

In the fourth year of Kaihuang (584), (a Khitan leader) led all chieftains to come to pay homage. In the fifth year (of Kaihuang) (585), all of the (Khitan) people came to submit (to the Sui), emperor Gaozu accepted them and settled them in their old land.

18. A.D. 585

Threatening the Türks

Sui Shu vol. 84, *Description of the Türks*:

時沙 略既為達頭所困，又東畏契丹，遣使告急。³⁷

At that time, in addition to being forced by Datou into an awkward predicament, (the Turkish) Shabolue khaghan was also in fear of the Khitan to the east. He sent missions to report (to the Sui) that they were in an emergency.

19. A.D. 586

Internal conflicts

Sui Shu vol. 84, *Description of the Khitan*:

六年，其諸部相攻擊，久不止，高祖使使責讓之。其國遣使謁闕，頓頽謝罪。³⁸

In the sixth year (of Kaihuang) (586), (the Khitan) tribes attacked one another endlessly. Emperor Kaozu sent envoys to blame them. When their envoys came to pay homage, they deeply apologized for their offence.

20. A.D. 587?

Chufu tribe

Sui Shu vol. 84, *Description of the Khitan*:

其後契丹別部出伏等背高麗，率眾內附。高祖納之，安置於渴奚那頡之北。³⁹

³⁶ *SS* 84. 1881.

³⁷ *Idem.* 1869.

³⁸ *Idem.* 1881.

Later, some collateral Khitan tribes, the Chufu and others, defected from the Koryō and led the tribesmen to surrender (to the Sui). Emperor Gaozu accepted and settled them north of Kexi Najie.

21. A.D. 600-608

A tribe, which deserted the Türks and submitted to the Sui

Sui Shu vol. 84, *Description of the Khitan*:

開皇末，其別部四千餘家背突厥來降。上方與突厥和好，重失遠人之心，悉令給糧還本，敕突厥撫納之。固辭不去。部落漸眾，遂北徙逐水草，當遼西正北二百里，依托紇臣水而居。東西亘五百里，南北三百里。⁴⁰

Towards the end of the Kaihuang period, more than four thousand households of a collateral tribe (of the Khitan) deserted the Türks and surrendered (themselves to the Sui). Since the emperor just had made reconciliation with the Türks, being afraid of breaking his promise to the remote people, he offered them provisions and ordered them back. An imperial edict was issued to ask the Türks to comfort and take the Khitan in. But (the Khitan) stubbornly refused to leave. Their tribes gradually increased in population, then migrated northward in pursuit of water and grass. They settled two hundred *li* directly north of Liaoxi along the Hechen River, covering an area five hundred *li* from east to west and three hundred *li* from north the south.

In the *Bei Shi* vol. 94, *Description of the Khitan* and *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*, there are exactly the same descriptions. In the *Tong Dian* vol. 200, *Description of the Northern Barbarians* part 7, the *Khitan*, there is an almost same description, but a sentence "亦鮮卑故地 (that was the old land of the Xianbei)" was added after "東西亘五百里南北三百里"⁴¹.

22. A.D. 605

Suffering an attack from the Tang allied with the Türks

Xin Tangshu vol. 103, *Biography of Wei Yunqi*:

(大業元年)，會契丹寇營州，詔雲起護突厥兵討之。啟民可汗以二萬騎受節度。盡獲其男女四萬，以女子及畜產之半賜突厥，男子悉殺之，以餘眾還。⁴²

In the first year of Daye (605), the Khitan raided Yingzhou. An imperial edict was issued to order (Wei) Yunqi to launch a punitive campaign against them with the

³⁹ *Idem.*

⁴⁰ *Idem.* 1881-1882.

⁴¹ *TD* 200. 5486.

⁴² *XTS* 103. 3993-3994.

assistance of Turkish troops. The Qimin Khaghan (r. 599-609) provided twenty thousand cavalymen to be under the command of (Wei Yunqi). ... Finally about four thousand Khitan men and women were captured. All the men were killed, and half of the women and livestock were bestowed to the Türks. The rest of women and animals were left in the Sui.

23. A.D. 581-618

Ten tribes in the period of Sui

Sui Shu vol. 84, *Description of the Khitan*:

開皇末，（契丹）部落漸眾，分為十部。兵多者三千，少者千餘... 有征伐，則酋帥相與議之，興兵動眾合符契。突厥沙 略可汗遣吐屯潘埒統之。⁴³

Towards the end of the Kaihuang period, (the Khitan) tribes gradually increased in population. They were divided into ten tribes, those with the most soldiers having three thousand, and those with the least having more than one thousand ... In case of a military operation, the chieftains discussed it together. In mobilizing troops, tallies needed to be matched. The Turkish Shabolue Khaghan sent the *Tutun Pandie* to control them.

In the *Bei Shi* vol. 94, *Description of the Khitan*, there is an almost the same description, but simply supplements with "契丹殺吐屯而遁。大業七年，遣使朝，貢方物。 (The Khitan killed the Tutun and fled away. In the seventh year of Daye, they sent envoys to come to pay homage and present specialties)." at the end of the paragraph. The *Liao Shi* has the same description as in the *Bei Shi*.

24. A.D. 581-618

Folk customs

(1). *Sui Shu* vol. 84, *Description of the Khitan*:

其俗頗與靺鞨同。好為寇盜，父母死而悲哭者，以為不壯，但以其尸置於山樹之上，經三年之後，乃收其骨而焚之，因酌而祝曰： "冬月時，向陽食。若我射獵時，使我得豬鹿。⁴⁴

The (Khitan's) customs were quite similar to the Mohe's. They were warlike, often plundering and raiding borders. They would not grieve or cry when their parents died. They just put the bodies into a tree in the mountains. After three years they went to collect the bones and cremated them, while offering wine for sacrifice and praying, "when it is in the winter months, eat with the face to the sun. When I am hunting, make me get more pigs and deer. "

⁴³ *SS* 84. 1882.

⁴⁴ *Idem*. 1881.

In the *Qidan Guozhi* vol. 23, *Territory and Customs* and *Tong Dian* vol. 200, *Description of the Northern Barbarians* part 7, *the Khitan*, there is almost the same description, but supplemented by "夏月時，向陰食 (When it is in the summer months, eat with the back to the sun.)" after "冬月時，向陽食".⁴⁵

(2). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

風俗與突厥大抵略侔。死不墓，以馬車載尸入山，置於樹顛。子孫死，父母旦夕哭；父母死則否，亦無喪期。⁴⁶

(The Khitan's) customs were generally similar to the Türks'. When people died, there was no grave. The body were transported to big mountains by carriage and put onto the top of a tree. When children died, their parents would cry for them day and night; but when parents died, their children would not cry. They had no funeral period.

In the *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*, the description of the Khitan's customs is almost the same as those in the *Xin Tangshu*, but just with "亦無服紀 (They also had no rules of dress for funeral ceremony also)" instead of "亦無喪期 (They also had no certain period of mourning)"; and with "其餘風俗與突厥同 (The other customs were as the same as the Türks)" instead of "風俗與突厥大抵略侔 (Their customs were generally similar to that of the Türks)"⁴⁷.

25. Beginning of 7th Century

Powerful Türks

Zizhi Tongjian vol. 185, *the fifth month of 618*:

時中國人避亂者多入突厥，突厥強盛，東自契丹，室韋，西盡吐谷渾，高昌，諸國皆臣之，控弦百餘萬。⁴⁸

At that time, most of refugees from China Proper fled to the Türks for shelter. Therefore, the Türks was getting stronger and their sphere of influence covered the area from the Khitan and Shiwei to the east and Tuyuhun and Gaochang to the west. Several million people were brought under its control.

26. A.D. 618-860

(1). Location of the Khitan

Jiu Tangshu vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

⁴⁵ QDGZ 23. 221; TD 200. 5485.

⁴⁶ XTS 219. 6167.

⁴⁷ JTS 199. 5350.

⁴⁸ ZZTJ 185. 5792.

契丹，居潢水之南，黃龍之北，鮮卑之故地，在京城東北五千三百里。東與高麗鄰，西與奚國接，南至營州，北至室韋。冷陁山在其國，南與奚西山相崎，地方二千里。⁴⁹

The Khitan inhabited the old land of the Xianbei, which was located south of the Huang River and north of Huanglong. It was five thousand three hundred *li* directly northeast of the (Tang) capital. (The territory) reached Gaoli (the Koryō) to the east, the Xi state to the west, Yingzhou to the south and the Shiwei to the north. The Lengxing Mountains, which was located within the (Khitan) state, linked the western Mountains of the Xi to the south. The territory was two thousand square *li*.

In the *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan* and *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*, there are almost the same description as in the *Jiu Tangshu*, but have omitted the sentence of “南與奚西山相崎，地方二千里”⁵⁰

(2). Military power of the Dahe confederation

Xin Tangshu vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

其君大賀氏有勝兵四萬，析八部。臣於突厥，以為俟斤。凡調發攻戰則諸部畢會，獵則部得自行。⁵¹

Their ruler, who was from the Dahe family, had forty thousand valiant soldiers. (The Khitan people) were divided into eight tribes and submitted to the Türks, who made him a Sijin. During mobilization and military enterprises the tribes all gathered together; in hunting each tribe could act independently.

27. A.D. 618-730

Dahe tribal confederation

Liao Shi vol. 32, *Account of Camping and Defending* part 2, *Tribes and Lineages* part 1:

唐世大賀氏仍為八部，而松漠，玄州別出，亦十部也。⁵²

During the Tang period, the Dahe confederation still had eight tribes. However, because those in Songmo and Xuanzhou had branched off from them, there were actually ten tribes.

唐大賀氏八部:

⁴⁹ *JTS* 199. 5349.

⁵⁰ *XTS* 219. 6167; *LS* 63. 952.

⁵¹ *XTS* 219. 6167.

⁵² *LS* 32. 376.

達稽部，峭落州；紇便部，彈汗州；獨活部，無逢州；芬間部，羽陵州；突便部，日連州；芮奚部，徒河州；墜斤部，萬丹州；伏部，州二：匹黎，赤山。

唐太宗置玄州，以契丹大帥據曲為刺史。又置松漠都督府，以窟哥為都督，分八部，并玄州為十州。即十部在其中矣。⁵³

The eight tribes of Dahe family in the Tang period:

The Daji tribe, Qiaoluo Zhou; the Hebian tribe, Tanhan Zhou; the Duhuo tribe, Wufeng Zhou; the Fenwen Tribe, Yuling Zhou; the Tubian tribe, Rilian Zhou; the Ruixi tribe, Tuhe Zhou; the Zhuijin tribe, Wandan Zhou; the Fu tribe, being divided into two prefectures: Pili Zhou and Chishan Zhou.

Emperor Taizong of the Tang set Xuanzhou, and appointed the Khitan supreme chief Juqu the prefect of it. Later, (he) set the Government-general of Songmo, and appointed Kuge the Governor-general of it. There were eight tribes under the administration. Adding Xuanzhou, there were ten prefectures all together. The ten tribes were within them.

28. End of the 6th Century to 730

Tribes outside the Dahe tribal confederation:

(1). Wozhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

沃州：載初中，析昌州置，處契丹松漠部落，隸營州。州陷契丹，乃遷於幽州，隸幽州都督。⁵⁴

Wozhou: In the years of Zaichu (689-690), it was set by dividing Changzhou for settling the Songmo tribe of the Khitan. It was subordinate to Yingzhou. When Yingzhou was captured by the Khitan, it was moved to Youzhou, and was subordinate to the Governor-general of Youzhou.

(2). Changzhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

昌州：貞觀二年置，領契丹松漠部落，隸營州都督。萬歲通天二年，遷於青州安置。神龍初還隸幽州。⁵⁵

⁵³ *Idem.* 379.

⁵⁴ *JTS* 39. 1524.

⁵⁵ *Idem.* 1525.

Changzhou: It was set in the second year of Zhenguan (628) for settling the Songmo tribe of the Khitan. It was subordinate to the Governor-general of Yingzhou. In the second year of Wansui Tongtian (697), it was moved to Qingzhou. At the beginning of the Shenlong period (705-707), it was moved back, and was subordinate to Youzhou.

(3). Shizhou

Xin Tangshu vol. 43, *Account of Geography* part 7:

師州：貞觀三年以契丹，室韋部置。⁵⁶

Shizhou was set in the third year of Zhenguan (629) for settling the Khitan and Shiwei tribes.

(4). Xuanzhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

玄州：隋開皇初置，處契丹李去間部落。萬歲通天二年，移於徐，宋安置。神龍元年復舊。今隸幽州。

Xuanzhou was set at the beginning of the Kaihuang period (581-600) of the Sui Dynasty for settling the Khitan tribe led by Li Qulü. In the second year of Wansui Tongtian, (this tribe) was moved to Xuzhou and Songzhou. In the first year of Shenlong (705), it was moved back (to Xuanzhou). Now it is subordinate to Youzhou.

Xin Tangshu vol. 43, *Account of Geography* part 7:

玄州，貞觀二十年以紇主曲據部落置。⁵⁷

Xuanzhou was set in the twentieth year of Zhenguan (646) for settling the Khitan tribe led by the (Ru) hezhu named Quju.

(5). Weizhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

威州：武德二年，置遼州總管，... . 貞觀元年，改為威州，隸幽州大都督。⁵⁸

⁵⁶ *XTS* 43. 1127.

⁵⁷ *Idem.* 1126.

⁵⁸ *JTS* 39. 1522.

Weizhou: In the second year of Wude (619), the governor of Liaozhou was set, ... In the first year of Zhenguan (627), (Liaozhou) was changed into Weizhou, and was subordinate to the chief Governor-general of Youzhou.

Xin Tangshu vol. 43, *Account of Geography* part 7:

威州：本州。武德二年以內稽部落置。⁵⁹

Weizhou: Its previous name was Liaozhou. In the second year of Wude (619), it was set for settling the Neiji tribe.

(6). Daizhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

帶州，貞觀十九年於營州界內置。處契丹乙失革部落，隸營州都督。萬歲通天元年遷於青州安置。神龍初放還，隸幽州都督。⁶⁰

Daizhou was set within the territory of Yingzhou in the nineteenth year of Zhenguan (645) for settling the Yishige tribe of the Khitan. It was subordinate to the Governor-general of Yingzhou. In the first year of Wansui Tongtian (696), (this tribe) was moved to Qingzhou. It was moved back (to Daizhou) at the beginning of period of Shenlong, and was subordinate to the Governor-general of Youzhou.

(7). Xinzhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

信州，萬歲通天元年置，處契丹(乙)失活部落，隸營州都督。二年，遷於青州安置。神龍初還，隸幽州都督。⁶¹

Xinzhou was set in the first year of Wansui Tongtian (696) for settling the (Yi) Shihuo tribe of the Khitan, and it was subordinate to Yingzhou. In the second year (of Wansui Tongtian) (697), (this tribe) was moved to Qingzhou. At the beginning of the Shenlong period, it was moved back (to Xinzhou), and was subordinate to the Governor-general of Youzhou.

Xin Tangshu vol. 43, *Account of Geography* part 7:

信州，萬歲通天元年以乙失活部落置。僑治范陽境。縣一：黃龍。⁶²

⁵⁹ *XTS* 43. 1126.

⁶⁰ *JTS* 39. 1524.

⁶¹ *Idem.* 1526.

Xinzhou was set for settling the Yishihuo tribe in the first year of Wansui Tongtian (696). The administrative seat was temporarily located within the territory of Fanyang. There was one county named Huanglong.

(8). Qingshan Zhou

Jiu Tangshu vol. 39, *Account of Geography* part 2:

青山州，景雲元年析玄州置，隸幽州都督。⁶³

Qingshan Zhou was set by dividing Xuanzhou in the first year of Jingyun (710). It was subordinate to the Governor-general of Youzhou.

Xin Tangshu vol. 43, *Account of Geography* part 7,

青山州，景雲元年析玄州置。僑治范陽之水門村。縣一：青山。⁶⁴

Qingshan Zhou was set by dividing Xuanzhou in the first year of Jingyun (710). Its administration seat was temporarily located in Shuimen village of Fanyang. There was one county named Qingshan.

29. Beginning of the 6th Century to end of the 9th Century

Pattern of succession

(1). *Jiu Wudai Shi* vol. 137, *Description of Foreign States* part 1, *the Khitan*:

先是，契丹之先大賀氏有勝兵四萬，分為八部，每部皆號大人，內推一為主，建旗鼓以尊之，每三年第其名以代之。⁶⁵

Previously, the ancestors of the Khitan led by the Dahe lineage had forty thousand valiant soldiers who were divided into eight tribes. The chieftain of each tribe was called *daren*. The supreme chieftain (of the eight tribes) was elected among those *darens*. Banner and drum were set for respecting him. The position was replaced every three years.

(2). *Xin Wudai Shi* vol. 72, *Appendix of Four Barbarians* part 1, *the Khitan*:

其部落之大者曰大賀氏。後分為八部... 部之長號大人。而常推一大人建旗鼓以統八部。至其歲久，或其國有灾疾而畜牧衰，則八部聚議，以旗鼓立其次而代之。被代者以為約本如此，不敢爭。⁶⁶

⁶² XTS 43. 1127.

⁶³ JTS 39. 1526.

⁶⁴ XTS 43. 1127.

⁶⁵ JWDS 137. 1827-1828.

The strongest lineage among the Khitan was called Dahe. Later, (the Khitan) were divided into eight tribes ... The chief of each tribe was called *daren*. One of the chiefs was elected to command all these eight tribes by setting banner and drum. When the position had been occupied by the same chief for too long a time, or the state was suffering calamity and there was the spread of an epidemic disease, the eight tribes gathered together and discussed these affairs. At the meeting the successor was elected by shifting the banner and drum, replacing the old one. The one who was replaced regarded (this pattern of succession) as a tradition, so that he did not dare to fight for (the position).

(3). *Tongjian Kaoyi* in *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 266, *the fifth month of 907*:

(契丹) 八部之長，皆號大人，稱刺史，常推一人為王，建旗鼓以尊之，每三年，第其名以相代。⁶⁷

The chieftains of (Khitan) eight tribes were called *daren*, or *cishi* (prefect). The supreme chieftain was elected among these *darens*, and banner and drum were set for respecting him. The position was replaced every three years.

(4). *Luting Zaji* by Zhao Zhizhong in *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 266, *the fifth month of 907*

(契丹) 凡立王，則眾部酋長皆集會議，其有德行功業者立之，或灾害不生，群牧孳盛，人民安堵，則王更不替代，苟不然，其諸酋長會眾部別選一名為王；故王以番法，亦甘心退焉，不為眾所害。⁶⁸

When the Khitan elected their supreme leader, all tribal chieftains gathered and discussed the matter. The one who had moral integrity and outstanding achievements was elected. If there were no calamities occurring, herds were getting multiplied, and people were living in peace and contentment, the supreme leader was not replaced. If there were problems, all tribal chieftains were assembled and they elected another one to become the leader. According to their law, the previous supreme leader had to resign. Therefore, they were not objected by the masses.

(5). *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*:

八部大人，法常三歲代，迭刺部耶律阿保機建旗鼓，自為一部，不肯受代，自號為王，盡有契丹國，遙輦氏遂亡。⁶⁹

⁶⁶ *XWDS* vol. 72. 886.

⁶⁷ *ZZTJ* 266. 8677.

⁶⁸ *Idem.* 8677-8678.

The supreme leader of the eight tribes was replaced every three years, according to the (Khitan) tradition. Yelü Abaoji, who was from the Yila tribe, set banner and drum and was not willing to be replaced. He called himself emperor, and then founded the Khitan state. The Yaonian lineage, therefore, declined.

(6). *Qidan Guozhi* Preface: *The Whole Course of the Khitan's Origin*:

八部大人 ... 三年一會，於各部內選雄勇有謀略者，立之為王，舊主退位，例以為常。⁷⁰

The chieftains of the eight tribes ... were assembled every three years. One who was valiant, resourceful and astute was elected among those tribal chieftains, to become the supreme leader. It was normal that the old supreme leader resigned.

30. A.D. 618-619

Raiding borders

Jiu Tangshu vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

武德初，數抄邊境。二年，入寇平州。⁷¹

At the beginning of Wude (618) period, (the Khitan) frequently raided borders. In the second year (of Wude) (619), they invaded Pingzhou.

31. A.D. 621

Sun Aocao

(1). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

武德中，其大酋孫敖曹與靺鞨長突地稽俱遣人來朝。

(孫)敖曹有孫曰萬榮，為歸誠州刺史。⁷²

In the middle of the Wude period, their supreme chieftain Sun Aocao and the Mohe ruler Tudiji sent missions to come for paying homage.

(Sun) Aocao had a grandson called Wanrong who was the prefect of Guicheng Zhou.

(2). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

⁶⁹ LS 63. 956.

⁷⁰ QDGZ Preface. 2.

⁷¹ JTS 199. 5350.

⁷² XTS 219. 6168.

又契丹有別部酋帥孫敖曹，初仕隋為金紫光祿大夫。武德四年，與靺鞨長突地稽俱遣使內附，詔令於營州城傍安置，授雲麾將軍，行遼州總管。⁷³

There was also a chieftain of a collateral Khitan tribe Sun Aocao who had previously served as Jinzi Guanglu Dafu in the Sui Dynasty. In the fourth year of Wude (621), (he) came to submit (to the Sui) together with the Mohe's ruler Tudiji. They were ordered to settle beside the city of Yingzhou. (Sun Aocao) was appointed the general of Yunhui and executive commander of Liaozhou.

In the *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*, this event is put after "武德初 at the beginning of Wude", that was the year of 618. Consulting the above sources quoted from the *Xin Tangshu* and *Jiu Tangshu*, this event should be put after "武德中 in the middle of the Wude period", that was the year of 621.

32. A.D. 623

Tributary activity

Jiu Tangshu vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

六年，其君長咄羅遣使貢名馬，豐貂。⁷⁴

In the sixth year (of Wude) (623), their ruler Duoluo sent missions to present famous steeds and high-quality fur of marten (to the Tang court).

In the *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan* and *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*, there are the same descriptions.

33. A.D. 628

Mohui's submission to the Tang

Jiu Tangshu vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

貞觀二年，其君摩會率其部落來降。突厥頡利遣使請以梁師都易契丹，太宗謂曰：“契丹，突厥本是別類，今來降我，何故索之？師都本中國人，據我州城，以為盜竊。突厥無故容納之，我師往討，便來救援。計不久自當擒滅；縱其不得，終不以契丹易之。”⁷⁵

In the second year of Zhenguan (628), their supreme chieftain Mohui led his tribes to submit (to the Tang). The Turkish Jieli Khaghan sent missions (to the Tang court), asking to exchange Liang Shidu for the Khitan. Emperor Taizong said to them, "the Khitan and Türks originally were different peoples, now the Khitan are

⁷³ *JTS* 199. 5350.

⁷⁴ *Idem.*

⁷⁵ *Idem.*

coming to submit to us, why do you ask for them? (Liang) Shidu originally was Chinese, but he had occupied our cities for plundering. The Türks unreasonably shielded him, and rescued him once I sent some punitive expeditions against him. I suppose that we shall put him down very soon. Even if I cannot get him, I never exchange the Khitan for him".

In the *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*, *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy* and *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 192, the fourth month of 628, there are almost the same description. But the *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi* supplement with "明年/三年，摩會復入朝，賜鼓纛，由是有常貢。(In the next year/ the third year (of Zhenguan) (629), Mohui came to pay homage again, he was awarded a Gudu (drum and banner, a symbol of the supreme chieftain of nomadic tribal confederation) in return. So that the tribute-presenting was becoming frequent.)", after the above paragraph.⁷⁶

34. A.D. 644

Bestowals

Jiu Tangshu vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

太宗伐高麗，至營州，會其君長及老人等，賜物各有差，授其蕃長窟哥為左武衛將軍。⁷⁷

When emperor Taizong was going to attack Gaoli (the Koryō) passing by Yingzhou, he met (the Khitan's) supreme ruler and other senior people, awarded them different presents according to their ranks, and granted their supreme chieftain Kuge the general of Zuo Wu Wei.

In the *Xin Tangshu*, there is almost the same description, but just supplements with "帝伐高麗，悉發酋長與奚首領從軍。(When the emperor was going to attack the Gaoli, he recruited the chieftains of the Khitan and Xi to join the army.)", before the above paragraph. The *Liao Shi* follows the *Xin Tangshu*, but has omitted "會其君長及老人，賜物各有差。(He met (the Khitan's) supreme ruler and other senior people, and awarded them different presents up to their ranks.)".⁷⁸

35. A.D. 646

Quju's submission to the Tang

Xin Tangshu vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

大酋辱紇主曲據又率眾歸，即其部為玄州，拜曲據刺史，隸營州都督府。⁷⁹

⁷⁶ XTS 219. 6168; LS 63. 952.

⁷⁷ JTS 199. 5350.

⁷⁸ XTS 219. 6168; LS 63. 952.

⁷⁹ XTS 219. 6168.

A Khitan chieftain of a big tribe Quju led his people to submit (to the Tang). (The Tang court) set Xuanzhou, which was subordinate to Yingzhou in the territory of his tribe, and Quju was granted the prefect of Xuanzhou.

In the *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of genealogy* and *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 199, the fourth month of 646, there are almost the same descriptions. But the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Tong Dian* have not recorded this event.

36. A.D. 648

Kuge's submission to the Tang

(1). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

(貞觀)二十二年，窟哥等部咸請內屬，乃置松漠都督府，以窟哥為左領軍將軍兼松漠都督，無極縣男，賜姓李氏。⁸⁰

In the twenty-second year (of Zhenguan (648)), all the Kuge's tribes asked to become Chinese vassals. Thus the Government-general of Songmo was set, and Kuge was granted the Governor-general of Songmo, baron of Wuji County and the surname Li (of the Tang imperial family).

(2). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

未幾，窟哥舉部內屬，乃置松漠都督府，以窟哥為使持節十州諸軍事，松漠都督，封無極男，賜氏李；以達稽部為峭落州，紇便部為彈汗州，獨活部為無逢州，芬間部為羽陵州，突便部為日連州，芮奚部為徒何州，墜斤部為萬丹州，伏部為黎，赤山二州，俱隸松漠府，即以辱紇主為之刺史。⁸¹

Soon after, Kuge led his tribes to submit to (the Tang), the Government-general of Songmo was set, and Kuge was granted the Governor-general of Songmo, baron of Wuji County and the surname Li. Qiaoluo Zhou was set for settling the Daji tribe, Tanhan Zhou was set for settling the Hebian tribe, Wufeng Zhou was set for settling the Duhuo tribe, Yuling Zhou was set for settling the Fenwen tribe, Rilian Zhou was set for settling the Tubian tribe, Tuhe Zhou was set for settling the Ruixi tribe, Wandan Zhou was set for settling the Zuijin tribe, Lizhou and Chishan Zhou were set for settling the Fu tribe. All the above prefectures were subordinate to the Government-general of Songmo. The tribal chieftains became the prefects.

37. A.D. 654

Defeating the Koguryō

⁸⁰ *JTS* 199. 5350.

⁸¹ *XTS* 219. 6168.

Zizhi Tongjian vol. 199, the tenth month of 654:

高麗遣其將安固將高麗，靺鞨兵擊契丹；松漠都督李窟哥御之，大敗高麗於新城。⁸²

The Gaoli (The Koryŏ) court sent a general An Gu to attack the Khitan by commanding the troops including the Koryŏ and Mohe soldiers. The Governor-general of Songmo Li Kuge defended and severely defeated the Gaoli (the Koryŏ) in Xincheng.

38. A.D. 658-660

Abugu was captured

(1). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

窟哥死，與奚連叛，行軍總管阿史德樞賓等執松漠都督阿卜固獻東都。⁸³

After Kuge had died, (the Khitan) revolted against the Tang together with the Xi. The commander in chief Ashide Shubin *et al.* captured the Governor-general of Songmo Abugu and transferred him to the eastern capital (modern Luoyang City of Henan Province).

The name Abugu is written "阿卜固" in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu* and *Zizhi Tongjian*, but "阿不固" in the *Liao Shi*. "卜" and "不" are two Chinese characters, but have the same pronunciation

(2). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 3, *Account of Emperor Gaozong*:

(顯慶)五年，十二月，阿史德樞賓及奚，契丹戰，敗之。⁸⁴

The twelfth month of fifth year (of Xianqing) (660), Ashide Shubin fought with the Xi and Khitan, and defeated them.

(3). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 111, *Biography of Xue Rengui*:

(顯慶四年) ... 俄與辛文陵破契丹於黑山，執其王阿卜固獻東都。⁸⁵

(In the fourth year of Xianqing) (659) ... Soon after Xin Wenling defeated the Khitan in the Hei Mountain. (The Khitan) king Abugu was captured and transferred to the eastern capital.

⁸² ZZTJ 199. 6286.

⁸³ XTS 219. 6168.

⁸⁴ *Idem* 3. 61.

⁸⁵ *Idem* 111. 4140-4141.

39. A.D. 679

Being instigated by the Türks

Zizhi Tongjian vol. 202, the tenth month of 679:

突厥扇誘奚，契丹侵掠營州，都督周道務遣戶曹始平唐休璟將兵擊破之。⁸⁶

The Türks instigated the Xi and Khitan to raid Yingzhou. The Governor-general (of Yingzhou) Zhou Daowu sent Tang Xiujing to defend, and then defeated them.

40. A.D. 696-697

Li-Sun rebellion

(1). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 205, the fifth month of 696:

營州契丹松漠都督李盡忠，歸誠州刺史孫萬榮舉兵反，攻陷營州，殺都督趙文翽。盡忠，萬榮妹夫也，皆居營州城側。文翽剛愎，契丹饑不加賑給，視酋長如奴僕，故二人怨而反。遣左鷹揚衛將軍曹仁師，右金吾衛大將軍張玄遇，左威衛大將軍李多祚，司農少卿麻仁節等二十八將討之。⁸⁷

The Governor-general of Songmo Li Jinzhong and the prefect of Guicheng Zhou Sun Wanrong rebelled against the Tang in Yingzhou. Soon after, Yingzhou was captured, and the Governor-general of Yingzhou Zhao Wenhui was killed. (Li) Jinzhong was (Sun) Wanrong's brother-in-law. Both of them lived beside the city of Yingzhou. (Zhao) Wenhui was so self-willed that he failed to pay relief when a serious famine occurred (in the region around Yingzhou). He also regarded the Khitan chieftains as servants. Due to the resentment against (Zhao Wenhui), these two men (Li and Sun) staged a rebellion. (The Tang emperor) sent twenty-eight generals, e.g. the general of Zuo Yingyang Wei Cao Renshi, the general of You Jiwu Wei Zhang Xuanyu, the general of Zuo Wei Wei Li Duozi, the Sinong Shaoqin Ma Renjie, *et al.* to suppress (the rebellion).

Jiu Tangshu vol. 6, *Account of Empress Zetian*:

萬歲通天元年，五月，契丹首領李盡忠與其妻兄歸誠州刺史孫萬殺都督趙文翽，舉兵反。⁸⁸

In the fifth month of the first year of Wansui Tongtian (696), the Khitan supreme chieftain Li Jinzhong and his wife's elder brother, the prefect of Guicheng Zhou

⁸⁶ *ZZTJ* 202. 6392-6393.

⁸⁷ *Idem.* 6504-6505.

⁸⁸ *JTS* 6. 125.

Sun Wanrong killed the Governor-general of Yingzhou Zhao Weihui, and launched a rebellion against (the Tang).

(2). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

窟哥有二孫：曰枯莫離，為左衛將軍，彈汗州刺史，...；曰盡忠，為武衛大將軍，松漠都督。⁸⁹

Kuge had two grandsons: (one) was called Kumoli who was the general of Zuo Wei, and the prefect of Tanhan Zhou, ...; (the other) was called Jinzhong who was the chief general of Wu Wei, and the Governor-general of Songmo.

In the *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199, *Description of the Khitan*, it is recorded: "during the time of (Wu) Zetian, (Kuge)'s great grandson Kumoli had been the general of Zuo Wei and the prefect of Tanhan prefecture"; "Jinzhong was an offspring of Kuge (who submitted to the Tang in 648)"⁹⁰. From 648 to 696, there had been more than fifty years passed. Therefore, it is very possible that Jinzhong was a grandson of Kuge, but not a great grandson. So that the record in the *Xin Tangshu* is correct. The *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy* follows the record in the *Xin Tangshu*.

(3). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199, *Description of the Khitan*:

至曾孫萬榮，垂拱初，累授右玉鈐衛將軍，歸誠州刺史，封永樂縣公。⁹¹

At the beginning of the Chuigong period (685-688), (Sun Aocao's) great grandson, (Sun) Wanrong, was repeatedly granted the general of You Yuqian Wei, the prefect of Guicheng Zhou, and Duke Yongle.

In the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, it is recorded that Sun Wanrong was Sun Aocao's grandson. According to the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Jiu Tangshu*, Sun Wanrong submitted to the Tang in 621, and the Li-Sun rebellion happened in 696. From 621 to 696, there had been over seventy years passed. Therefore it is very possible that Sun Wanrong was the great grandson of Sun Aocao. So that the record in *Jiu Tangshu* is correct. The *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy* follows the record in the *Jiu Tangshu*.

(4). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 205, *the seventh month of 696*:

盡忠尋自稱無上可汗，據營州，以萬榮為前鋒，略地，所向皆下，旬日，兵至數萬，進圍檀州，清邊前軍副總管張九節擊却之。⁹²

(Li) Jinzhong declared himself the paramount khaghan, occupied Yingzhou, and then appointed (Sun) Wanrong the vanguard. (The Khitan) captured all territories

⁸⁹ XTS 219. 6128.

⁹⁰ JTS 199. 5350.

⁹¹ *Idem*.

⁹² ZZTJ 205. 6506.

they passed by. Just after ten days, their military force increased into several tens of thousands strong, advancing Tanzhou. The deputy commander in chief of the Tang defending forces Zhang Jiujiu repelled them.

(5). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol.205, the eighth month of 696:

曹仁師，張玄遇，麻仁節與契丹戰於硤石谷，唐兵大敗 ... 契丹設伏橫擊之，飛索以躡玄遇，仁節，生獲之。⁹³

Cao Renshi, Zhang Xuanyu and Ma Renjie fought with the Khitan in the Xiashi Gorge, but failed. The Khitan ambushed (the Tang troops), and captured (Zhang) Xuanyu and (Ma) Renjie.

In the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu*, it is recorded, "曹仁師，張玄遇，麻仁節與契丹戰於西硤石谷 ... Cao Renshi, Zhang Xuanyu and Ma Renjie were fighting with the Khitan in the West Xiashi Gorge,..."⁹⁴.

(6). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

敗書聞，后乃以右武衛大將軍建安王武攸宜為清邊道大總管，擊契丹，... .⁹⁵

Having heard the report of lost battle, the empress appointed the great general of You Wu Wei Wu Youyi the commander in chief of Qingbian Dao to attack the Khitan.

(7). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 205, *the ninth month of 696*:

制：“天下系囚及庶士家奴驍勇者，官償其直，發以擊契丹。”初令山東近邊諸州置武騎團兵 ... 以討契丹。⁹⁶

An imperial decree was issued: "all the warriors among prisoners and servants must be forced to attack the Khitan. The official reward will come afterward according to everybody's deserts". The imperial court issued an order to set cavalry troops in various prefectures, which were close to the northeastern frontier, for defending the Khitan.

(8). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 205, *the ninth month of 696*:

突厥默啜請為太后子，并為其女求婚，悉歸河西降戶，帥其部眾為國討契丹。⁹⁷

⁹³ *Idem.*

⁹⁴ *JTS* 199. 5351; *XTS* 219. 6169.

⁹⁵ *XTS* 219. 6169.

⁹⁶ *ZZTJ* 105. 6507.

⁹⁷ *Idem.* 6509.

The Turkish Mochuo asked to become a son of empress Wu and an imperial marriage for his daughter. (He would like) to assist the Tang to defend the Khitan, if the subdued Turkish households in Hexi could be totally returned back to him.

(9). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 205, *the tenth month of 696*:

契丹李盡忠卒，孫萬榮代領其眾。突厥默啜乘間襲松漠，虜盡忠，萬榮妻子而去。太后進拜默啜為頡跌利施大單于，立功報國可汗。⁹⁸

The Khitan leader Li Jinzhong died. Sun Wanrong took the place of him to lead the Khitan people. Taking advantage of (Li Jinzhong's death), the Turkish Mochuo made a surprise attack on the region of Songmo and captured wives and children of (Li) Jinzhong and (Sun) Wanrong. Mochuo was granted by empress Wu great Shanyu of Jiedielishi and meritorious Khaghan.

孫萬榮收合餘眾，軍勢復振，遣別帥駱務整，何阿小為前鋒，攻陷冀州，殺刺史陸寶積，屠吏民數千人；又攻瀛州，河北震動。⁹⁹

Sun Wanrong collected the remnants. (The Khitan) military forces were restored. (Sun Wanrong) appointed Luo Wuzheng and He Axiao the vanguards (to advance the south). (The Khitan) captured Jizhou (modern Shijianzhuang City of Hebei Province), murdered the prefect Lu Shiji, and killed several thousand common people. They captured Yingzhou (modern Cangzhou City of Hebei Province) again. The whole Hebei was shocked.

(10). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, *the third month of 697*:

清邊道總管王孝傑，蘇宏暉等將兵十七萬與孫萬榮戰於東硤石谷，唐兵大敗，孝傑死之。... 契丹乘勝寇幽州，攻陷城邑，剽掠吏民，攸宜遣將擊之，不克。¹⁰⁰

The commander in chief Wang Xiaojie, Su Honghui *et al.* commanded a 170,000 strong army to fight with Sun Wanrong in the East Xiashi Gorge, but failed. (Wang) Xiaojie died (in the battle field). ... The Khitan took advantage of this to raid Youzhou, captured the city, and plundered the people. (Wu) Youyi sent generals to attack (the Khitan), but failed.

In the *Jiu Tangshu*, it is recorded, "又令夏官尚書王孝傑，左羽林將軍蘇宏暉領兵七萬以繼之，... Again ordered Xiaguan Shangshu Wang Xiaojie and the general of Zuo Yulin Su Honghui to command a 70,000 strong army to succeed, ... "¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ *Idem.* 6510.

⁹⁹ *Idem.*

¹⁰⁰ *Idem.* 6514-6515.

¹⁰¹ *JTS* 199. 5351.

(11). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, the third month of 697:

初，咸亨中，突厥有降者，皆處之豐，勝，靈，夏，朔，代六州，至是，默啜求六州降戶及單于都護府之地，并穀種，繒帛，農器，鐵，太后不許。默啜怒，言辭悖慢。姚璿，楊再思以契丹未平，請依默啜所求給之。麟臺少監，知鳳閣侍郎贊皇李嶠曰：“戎狄貪而無信，此所謂‘借寇兵資盜糧’也，不如治兵以備之”。璿，再思固請與之，乃悉驅六州降戶數千帳以與默啜，并給穀種四萬斛，雜綵五萬段，農器三千事，鐵四萬斤，并許其婚。默啜由是益強。¹⁰²

During the years of Xianheng, the subdued Turkish households were settled in the six prefectures of Feng, Sheng, Ling, Xia, Shuo and Dai. Up to now, Mochuo asked for the households of these six prefectures, the land of Shanyu Protectorate, and even seed-grain, silk, farming implements and ironworks as well. Initially empress Wu did not agree to (the conditions). Mochuo got angry, and spoke to the court arrogantly. Yao Chou and Yang Zaisi asked the court to accept (Mochuo's) request, for the Khitan rebellion had not been put down. Li Qiao said, "The barbarians are always avaricious and treacherous, this is so-called 'to lend warriors to the enemy and to give grain to the robber'. It is better to take precautions against (the Türks) by using military forces." (Yao) Chou and (Yang) Zaisi resolutely asked the court to consent Mochuo's request. So, several thousand subdued (Turkish) households from the six prefectures were returned back to Mochuo. Additionally Mochuo also got 40,000 *hu* of (equal to about 799,440 liters)¹⁰³ seed-grain, 50,000 *duan* of (equal to about 462,000 meters) various kinds of colored silk, 3,000 pieces of farming implements, 40,000 *jin* of (equal to 9,760 kilograms) and an imperial marriage. Mochuo, from this time on, continued to get stronger.

(12). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, the forth month of 697:

以右金吾衛大將軍武懿宗為神兵道行軍大總管，與右豹韜衛將軍何迦密將兵擊契丹。¹⁰⁴

(The Tang court) appointed the great general of You Jinwu Wei Wu Yizong the commander in chief of Shenbing Dao to attack the Khitan together with the general of You Baotao Wei He Jiami.

(13). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, the fifth month of 697:

¹⁰² ZZTJ 206. 6516.

¹⁰³ The translation of Han measurements into modern equivalents, see Barfield 1989 note. no. 21, p. 81.

¹⁰⁴ ZZTJ 206. 6517.

又以婁師德為清邊道副大總管，右武威衛將軍沙吒忠義為前軍總管，將兵二十萬擊契丹。¹⁰⁵

(The Tang court) again sent commanders Lou Shide and Shazha Zhongyi to attack the Khitan by leading 200,000 troops.

In the *Jiu Tangshu*, it is recorded, "..... 率兵三十萬以討之. (... leading 300,000 troops to attack the Khitan)."¹⁰⁶ In the *Xin Tangshu*, the record is the same as in the *Zizhi Tongjian*¹⁰⁷.

(14). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, *the sixth month of 697*:

武懿宗軍至趙州，聞契丹將駱務整數千騎將至冀州，懿宗懼，欲南遁。或曰：“虜無輜重，以抄掠為資，若按兵拒守，勢必離散，從而擊之，可有大功。”懿宗不從，退據相州，委棄軍資器仗甚眾。契丹遂屠趙州。¹⁰⁸

When Wu Yizong's army arrived in Zhaozhou, (he) heard that the Khitan general Luo Wuzheng's several thousand cavalry were moving to Jizhou. (Wu) Yizong was scared and intended to flee to the south. Someone said, "The barbarians have no supplies and gear and rely on robbery for supplies, so they will dissolve sometime. (If we) follow and attack them, we must succeed." (Wu) Yizong did not take (this advice), and then shrank back to Xiangzhou with plenty of supplies and gear being abandoned. The Khitan (took advantage of this) to massacred the inhabitants of Zhaozhou.

(15). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, *the sixth month of 697*:

萬榮之破王孝傑也，於柳城西北四百里依險築城，留其老弱婦女，并獲器仗資財，使妹夫乙冤羽守之，引精兵寇幽州。恐突厥默啜襲其後，遣五人至黑沙，語默啜曰：“我已破王孝傑百萬之眾，唐人破胆，請與可汗乘勝共取幽州。”三人先至，默啜喜，賜以緋袍。二人後至，默啜怒其稽緩，將殺之，二人曰：“請一言而死。”默啜問其故，二人以契丹之情告。默啜乃殺前三人而賜後二人緋，使為向導，發兵取契丹新城，殺所獲涼州都督許欽明以祭天；圍新城三日，克之，盡俘以歸。使乙冤羽馳報萬榮。¹⁰⁹

After having defeated Wang Xiaojie, (Sun) Wanrong built a city 400 *li* northwest of Liucheng for settling the Khitan's old, the weak and the women. The city also stored the looted weapons and property, and (Sun Wanrong) let his brother-in-law

¹⁰⁵ *Idem.*

¹⁰⁶ *JTS* 199. 5153.

¹⁰⁷ *XTS* 219. 6169.

¹⁰⁸ *ZZTJ* 206. 6520.

¹⁰⁹ *Idem.* 6521.

Yiyuanyu defend it. Then, he commanded picked troops to raid Youzhou. (Sun Wanrong) was afraid of the Türks' attack at their rear, so he sent five men to Heisha to tell Mochuo, "We have already defeated Wang Xiaojie's one million troops, the Tang people are scared to death, so we intend to capture Youzhou by co-operating with you." Three of the five men arrived early and Mochuo was so pleased that he awarded them red robes. The other two arrived later and Mochuo was so angry for their delay that he was going to kill them. But the two men said, "please let us say a word before we die" Mochuo asked them the reason and the two men told (Mochuo) all about the Khitan's situation. Then, Mochuo killed the first three and awarded red robes to the other two, and let them to be guides to capture the Khitan's new city. (Mochuo) killed the Governor-general of Liangzhou (modern Wuwei City of Gansu Province) Xu Qinming as a sacrifice to the Heaven. (Mochuo) besieged the new city for three days, and then took it, capturing all (Khitan people who were in the new city) and took them back (to the territory of Türks). (Mochuo) let Yiyuanyu report it to (Sun) Wanrong.

Jiu Tangshu vol. 194, *Description of the Türks* part 1:

默啜遂攻討契丹，部眾大潰，盡獲其家口，默啜自此兵眾漸盛。¹¹⁰

Mochuo attacked the Khitan, (the Khitan) tribesmen then collapsed in disorder. The Türks gained all the Khitan households. From then on, the population under Mochuo's control was getting increased.

Xin Tangshu vol. 140, *Description of the Türks* part 1:

默啜乃引兵擊契丹，會盡忠死，襲松漠部落，盡得孫萬榮妻子輜重，酋長崩潰。¹¹¹

Mochuo commanded his troops to attack the Khitan. When (Li) Jinzhong died, Mochuo invaded the Khitan tribes in the region of Songmo, capturing Sun Wanrong's wife and children and all the supplies and gear (of the Khitan). The Khitan, therefore, collapsed.

(16). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, *the sixth month of 697*:

時萬榮方與唐兵相持，軍中聞之，凶懼。奚人叛萬榮，神兵道總管楊玄基擊其前，奚兵擊其後，獲其獎何阿小。萬榮軍大潰，帥輕騎數千東走。前軍總管張九節遣兵邀之於道，萬榮窮蹙，與其奴逃至潞水東，息於林下，嘆曰：“今欲歸唐，罪已大。歸突厥亦死，歸新羅亦死。將安之乎！”奴斬其首以降，梟之四方館門。其餘眾及奚，雷皆降於突厥。¹¹²

¹¹⁰ *JTS* 194. 5168.

¹¹¹ *XTS* 215. 6045.

¹¹² *ZZTJ* 206. 6521.

At that time (Sun) Wanrong was at a deadlock with the Tang troops. His soldiers were frightened, when they heard (the Türks had taken their new city). The Xi people betrayed (Sun) Wanrong, the Tang commander Yang Xuanji attacked (Sun Wanrong) on the front, and the Xi troops attacked him at the back, and captured his general He Axiao. Sun Wanrong's army was utterly put to rout. (Sun Wanrong) led several thousand cavalymen and fled eastward. The Tang commander Zhang Jiuji sent troops to intercept them on the road. (Sun) Wanrong was driven into an impasse, and fled with his servant to the east of the Lushui River. He had a rest under trees, sighed and said, "Now I am guilty of crimes, so that I cannot submit to the Tang. I will be killed if I submit to the Türks, so do I submit to the Xinluo (the Silla). What can I do?" His servant killed him and yielded to the Tang. (Sun Wanrong's) head was cut off and displayed to the public on the gate of Sifang Guan. The remnants of the Khitan, the Xi and the Bai Xi peoples submitted to the Türks.

(17). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

奴斬其首，九節傳之東都，眾潰散，后喜，為赦天下，改元神功。¹¹³

(Sun Wanrong)'s servant cut off his head. (Zhang) Jiuji transferred it to the eastern capital. The remnants (of the Khitan) dispersed. The empress was so pleased that she issued an order of general amnesty and changed the reign title into Shengong (the Miraculous Achievement).

(18). *Jiu Tangshu* vol.194, *Description of the Türks* part 1:

契丹及奚自神功之後，常受其徵役。¹¹⁴

After the year of Shengong (967), the Khitan and Xi were frequently requisitioned and enslaved by them (the Türks).

41. A.D. 698-714

Remaining activities after the Li-Sun rebellion

(1). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

契丹不能立，遂附突厥。¹¹⁵

¹¹³ *XTS* 219. 6169-6170.

¹¹⁴ *JTS* 194. 5172

¹¹⁵ *XTS* 219. 6170.

The Khitan could not support themselves, so they subordinated themselves to the Türks.

(2). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 206, *the sixth month of 700*:

初契丹將李楷固，... 黃 之戰，張玄遇，麻仁節皆為所躡。又有駱務整者，亦為契丹將，屢敗唐兵。及孫萬榮死，二人皆來降。... 太后以楷固為左玉鈐衛將軍，務整為右武威衛將軍，使將兵擊契丹餘黨，悉平之。¹¹⁶

Previously, the Khitan general Li Kaigu had captured (the Tang generals) Zhang Xuanyu and Ma Renjie in the Huangzhang Campaign. Another Khitan general Luo Wuzheng had defeated the Tang troops on several occasions. After Sun Wanrong had died, the two generals submitted (to the Tang). ... Empress (Wu) granted (Li) Kaigu the general of Zuo Yuqian Wei and (Luo) Wuzheng the general of You Wuwei Wei, and ordered them to command troops to attack the remnants of the Khitan, and then defeated them.

(3). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 210, *the sixth month of 712*:

佺帥左驍衛將軍李楷洛，左威衛將軍周以悌發兵二萬，騎八千，分為三軍，以襲奚，契丹。¹¹⁷

(Sun) Quan commanded generals Li Kailuo and Zhou Yiti to send off 20,000 infantrymen and 8,000 cavalrymen for launching an attack on the Xi and Khitan.

(4). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 210, *the eleventh month of 712*:

奚，契丹二萬騎寇漁陽，幽州都督宋璟閉門不出，虜大掠而去。¹¹⁸

The Xi and Khitan's 20,000 cavalrymen raided Yuyang. The Governor-general of Youzhou Song Jing closed the city gate and refused to go out (to beat back). The barbarians (the Xi and Khitan) looted the city, and then went back.

(5). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 211, *the seventh month of 714*:

薛訥與左監門衛將軍杜賓客，定州刺史崔宣道等將兵六萬，出檀州擊契丹。... 唐兵大敗，死者什八九。¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ ZZTJ 206. 6547.

¹¹⁷ *Idem* 210. 6672.

¹¹⁸ *Idem*. 6678.

¹¹⁹ *Idem* 211. 6702.

Xue Ne with the general of Zuo Jianmen Wei Du Binke and the prefect of Dingzhou Cui Xuandao commanded 60,000 troops to attack the Khitan. ... The Tang troops were utterly defeated, eight or nine out of ten soldiers were killed.

42. A.D. 714-720

Submission to the Tang again

Xin Tangshu vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

開元二年，盡忠從父弟都督失活以默啜政衰，率部落與頡利發伊健啜來歸，玄宗賜丹書鐵券。後二年，與奚長李大酺皆來，詔復置松漠都督府，以失活為都督，封松漠郡王，授左金吾衛大將軍；仍其府置靜析軍，以失活為經略大使，所統八部皆擢其酋為刺史。詔將軍薛泰為押蕃落使，督軍鎮撫。帝以東平王外孫楊元嗣女為永樂公主，妻失活。明年，失活死，贈特進，帝遣使吊祠，以其弟中郎將娑固襲封及所領。明年，娑固與公主來朝，宴有加。¹²⁰

In the second year of Kaiyuan (714), due to the destruction of Mochuo, (Li) Jinzhong's cousin, the Governor-general (Li) Shihuo came to submit (to the Tang) with Jielifa Yijianchuo. Emperor Xuanzong awarded Danshu Tiequan to them. Two years later (716), (Li) Shihuo came to pledge allegiance to the Tang together with the Xi ruler Li Dapu. An imperial edict ordered to reset the Government-general of Songmo. (Li) Shihuo was granted the Prince of Songmo, the great general of Zuo Jinwu Wei and the Governor-general of Songmo. The Jingxi army was also reset at the Government-general, and (Li) Shihuo was appointed the chief official of it. The chieftains of the eight tribes he led were granted the prefects. General Xue Tai was appointed "an official of escorting barbarians" to oversee them. Emperor (Xuanzong) granted the maternal grand daughter of the Prince of Dongping, daughter of Yang Yuansi the Princess of Yongle to marry (Li) Shihuo. In the next year (717), (Li) Shihuo died. He was granted a special title, Tejin. The emperor sent missions to offer his condolence. His younger brother Suogu was permitted to inherit all his titles of official and nobility. One year later (718), Suogu came to pay homage together with the Chinese princess, and then was awarded a banquet and some presents.

In the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Zizhi Tongjian*, there are almost the same descriptions. But the Date of resetting the Government-general of Songmo is different. In the *Xin Tangshu* and *Zizhi Tongjian*, it is the fourth year of Kaiyuan, (716)¹²¹, but in the *Jiu Tangshu*, it is the third year of Kaiyuan (715).¹²²

¹²⁰ *XTS* 219. 6170.

¹²¹ *ZZTJ* 211. 6720.

¹²² *JTS* 199. 5351.

43. A.D. 720-734

Ketuyu's coup d'etat

(1). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 212, the eleventh month of 720:

契丹牙官可突干驍勇得眾心，李娑固猜畏，欲去之。是歲，可突干舉兵擊娑固，娑固敗奔營州。營州都督許欽澹遣安東都護薛泰帥驍勇五百與奚王李大酺奉娑固以討之，戰敗，娑固，李大酺皆為可突干所殺，生擒薛泰，營州震恐。許欽澹移軍入渝關，可突干立娑固從父弟鬱干為主，遣使請罪。上赦可突干之罪，以鬱干為松漠都督，以李大酺之弟魯蘇為饒樂都督。¹²³

The Khitan military leader Ketugan was valiant, so that he was beloved and supported by the Khitan people. Suogu was so jealous and frightened of him that he plotted to murder him. In this year, Ketugan commanded troops to attack Suogu. Suogu failed and fled to Yingzhou for protection. The Governor-general of Yingzhou Xu Qinzhan ordered general Xue Tai to lead 500 warriors to attack Ketugan in the name of Suogu, allied with the Xi king Li Dapu. (Finally the Tang troops) were failed, Suogu and Li Dapu were killed and Xue Tai was captured by Ketugan. The area of Yingzhou was strongly shocked. Xu Qinzhan then moved the army to the Yu Guan Pass. Ketugan enthroned Suogu's cousin Yugan to be the Khitan king, and dispatched an envoy to humbly apologize (to the Tang court). Emperor (Xuanzong) had absolved Ketugan, and granted Yugan the Governor-general of Songmo. He also granted Li Dapu's younger brother Lusu the Governor-general of Raole.

The name Ketuyu is written as Ketuyu in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*. But in the *Zizhi Tongjian*, it is written as Ketugan.

The name Yuyu is written as Yuyu in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*. But in the *Zizhi Tongjian*, it is written as Yugan.

(2). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

十年，鬱于入朝請婚。上又封從妹夫率更令慕容嘉賓女為燕郡公主以妻之。乃封鬱于為松漠郡王，授左金吾為員外大將軍，兼靜析軍經略大使，賜物千段。鬱于還蕃，可突于來朝，拜左羽林將軍，從幸并州。¹²⁴

In the tenth year (of Kaiyuan) (722), Yuyu came to the court to ask for an imperial marriage. Emperor (Xuanzong) granted his distant brother-in-law Murong Jiabin's daughter the Princess of Yanjun to marry Yuyu. Furthermore Yuyu was granted the Prince of Songmo, the great general of Zuo Jinwu and the executive

¹²³ ZZTJ 212. 6743.

¹²⁴ JTS 199. 5352.

commander of Jingxi Army; and was awarded one thousand pieces of presents. When Yuyu went back, Ketuyu came to pay homage. He was granted the general of You Yulin, and was in company with (the emperor) to inspect Bingzhou.

(3). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 212, *the eleventh month of 724*:

是歲，契丹王李鬱干卒，弟吐干襲位。¹²⁵

In this year, the Khitan king Li Yugan died. His younger brother Tugan took his place (to be the Khitan king).

The name Tuyu is written as Tuyu in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*. But in the *Zizhi Tongjian*, it is written as Tugan.

(4). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 212, *the twelfth month of 725*:

先是，契丹王李吐干與可突干復相猜忌，携公主來奔，不敢復還，更封遼陽王，留宿衛；可突干立李盡忠之弟邵固為主。¹²⁶

Previously, the Khitan king Li Tugan and Ketugan were suspicious of each other. (Li Tugan) brought the princess along to flee to (the Tang), and did not dare to go back. He was granted the Prince of Liaoyang, and stayed there for guarding. Ketugan enthroned Li Jinzhong's younger brother Shaogu to be the Khitan chief.

(5). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 199 part 2, *Description of the Khitan*:

其冬，車駕東巡，邵固謁行所在，因從至岳下，拜左羽林員外大將軍，靜析軍經略大使，改封廣化郡王，又封皇從外孫女陳氏為東華公主以妻之。¹²⁷

In the winter of this year (725), while the emperor was inspecting the east, Shaogu came to pay a formal visit, and then was in company with the emperor. When arrived at the foot of the mountains, (Shaogu) was granted the great general of Zuo Yulin and the executive commander of Jingxi army. His noble title was changed into the Prince of Guanghua. (The emperor) also granted his distant granddaughter Chen the Princess of Donghua to marry (Shaogu).

(6). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 213, *the fifth month of 730*:

初，契丹李邵固遣可突干入貢，同平章事李元紘不禮焉... 可突干殺邵固，帥其國人并脅奚眾叛降突厥，奚王李魯蘇及其妻韋氏，邵固妻陳氏皆來奔... 制幽州長史趙含章討之，又命中書舍人裴寬，給事中薛侃等於關內，河東，河南，河北分道募勇士。¹²⁸

¹²⁵ ZZTJ 212. 6762.

¹²⁶ *Idem.* 6769.

¹²⁷ JTS 199. 5352.

Previously, when the Khitan king Li Shaogu sent Ketugan to present tributes to the imperial court, the official in charge Li Yuanhong mistreated him with rudeness ... (At that time,) Ketugan murdered Shaogu, and led his people and the Xi people to submit to the Türks. The Xi king Li Lusu and his wife Wei and Shaogu's wife Chen fled to the Tang for protection ... An imperial edict was issued. It ordered Zhao Hanzhang, the Zhangshi of Youzhou, to send a punitive expedition against (the Khitan), and ordered Zhongshu Sheren Pei Kuan, Jishizhong Xue Kan, *et al.* to recruit warriors for the army from different regions of Guannei, Hedong, Henan, and Hebei.

(7). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 213, *the sixth month of 730*:

可突干寇平盧，先鋒使張掖烏承玘破之於捺祿山。¹²⁹

When Ketugan raided Pinglu, the vanguard general Wu Chengci defeated him in the Nalu Mountain.

(8). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 8, *Account of Emperor Xuanzong* part 1:

二十年，三月，信安王禕與幽州長史趙含章大破奚，契丹於幽州之北山。¹³⁰

In the third month of the twentieth year (of Kaiyuan) (732), the Prince of Xin'an Wei and the Zhangshi of Youzhou Zhao Hanzhang utterly defeated the Xi and Khitan in the northern Mountains of Youzhou.

(9). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 213, *the second month of 732*:

可突干帥麾下遠遁，餘黨潛竄山谷。奚酋李詩瑣高帥五千餘帳來降。賜李詩爵歸順王，充歸義州都督，徙其部落置幽州境內。¹³¹

Ketugan led the troops under his command and fled far away. The remnants of the Khitan fled in disorder to the mountain valley. The Xi chieftain Li Shi Suogao came to surrender with over five thousand tents (to the Tang). He was granted the noble title of the Prince of Guishun and was appointed the Governor-general of Guiyi Zhou. His tribes settled within the territory of Youzhou.

(10). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 213, *the forth month of 733*:

¹²⁸ ZZTJ 213. 6789.

¹²⁹ *Idem.* 6790.

¹³⁰ JTS 8. 197.

¹³¹ ZZTJ 213. 6797.

時節度使薛楚玉遣英傑將精騎一萬及降奚擊契丹，屯於榆關之外。可突干引突厥之眾來合戰。奚持兩端，散走保險；唐兵不利，英傑戰死。餘眾六千餘人猶力戰不已，虜以英傑首示之，竟不降，盡為虜所殺。¹³²

The military governor (of Youzhou) Xue Chuyu sent (Guo) Yingjie to command 10,000 picked cavalymen and the subdued Xi people to attack the Khitan, (the troops) being stationed outside of the Yu Guan Pass. Ketugan allied with the Türks to meet head-on. The Xi people wavered between both sides, then dispersed, protecting themselves. The Tang troops were at a disadvantage and (Guo) Yingjie was killed on the battlefield. The 6,000 reminders of the Tang troops still kept fighting. The Khitan showed them (Guo) Yingjie's head, but they did not give up, and finally they were all killed by the Khitan.

(11). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 214, *the twelfth month of 734*:

時可突干連年為邊患，趙含章，薛楚玉皆不能討，守珪到官，屢擊破之。可突干困迫，遣使詐降，守珪使管記王悔就撫之。悔至其牙帳，察契丹上下殊無降意，但稍徙營帳近西北，密遣人引突厥，謀殺悔以叛；悔知之。牙官李過折與可突干爭權不葉，悔說過折以圖之。過折夜勒兵斬屈列及可突干，盡誅其黨，帥餘眾來降。守珪出師紫蒙州，大閱以鎮撫之。梟屈列可突干首於天津(橋)之南。¹³³

Previously, Ketugan raided the border for many years running. Both Zhao Hanzhang and Xue Chuyu could not subdue him. (Zhang) Shougui had defeated him many times since he had assumed the post. Ketugan was in a difficult position, so that he pretended to surrender. (Zhang) Shougui sent Wang Hui to comfort the Khitan. While (Wang) Hui reached the Khitan's main camp, he found that the Khitan were by no means going to give up. The Khitan moved the camps slightly to the northwest, secretly sent somebody to ally with the Türks, plotted to murder (Wang) Hui and rebel against (the Tang). (Wang) Hui knew about this. (The Khitan) military official Li Guozhe shared the right of commanding Khitan military forces with Ketugan. They continually struggled for power. (Wang) Hui persuaded (Li) Guozhe to murder (Ketugan). At night, (Li) Guozhe ordered his soldiers to kill Qulie and Ketugan, as well as all their henchmen. He then led the remaining Khitan people to submit (to the Tang). (Zhang) Shougui sent out an army to Zimeng Zhou, reviewing and comforting the subdued Khitan people. Qulie and Ketugan's heads were cut off and displayed south of the Tianjin Qiao Bridge.

(12). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 214, *the first month of 735*:

¹³² *Idem.* 6801-6802.

¹³³ *Idem* 214. 6808-6809.

契丹知兵馬中郎李過折來獻捷；制以過折為北平王，檢校松漠都督。¹³⁴

The Khitan military chief Li Guozhe reported victory (to the Tang court). An imperial edict was issued to grant (Li) Guozhe the Prince of Beiping and was appointed the Governor-general of Songmo.

(13). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 214, *the twelfth month of 735*.

是歲，契丹王過折為其臣涅禮所殺，并其諸子，一子刺乾奔東得免。涅禮上言，過折用刑殘虐，眾情不安，故殺之。上赦其罪，因以涅禮為松漠都督... 突厥尋引兵東侵奚，契丹，涅禮與奚王李歸國擊破之。¹³⁵

In this year, the Khitan king (Li) Guozhe and his sons were murdered by Nieli. One of his sons Laqian fled to Andong to avoid the massacre. Nieli said (to the Tang court) that (Li) Guozhe was so cruel in using criminal penalty that the (Khitan) public feeling was restless and troubled. Thus (Guozhe) was killed. Emperor (Xuanzong) absolved Nieli, and appointed him the Governor-general of Songmo ... Soon after, the Turkish troops invaded the Xi and Khitan, Nieli and the Xi king Li Guiguo defeated them.

(14). *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*:

自此，契丹中衰，大賀氏附庸於奚王，以通於唐，朝貢歲至。¹³⁶

From then on, the Khitan were falling into decline. The Dahe lineage became appendage to the Xi king. By this way, they communicated with the Tang, and came to present tributes annually.

(15). *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 9, *Account of Emperor Xuanzong* part 2:

開元二十五年，二月，... 癸酉，張守珪破契丹餘眾於捺祿山，殺獲甚眾。¹³⁷

In the second month of twenty-fifth year of Kaiyuan (737), ... on the day of Guiyou, Zhang Shougui severely defeated the remnants of the Khitan in the Nalu Mountain, killed and captured numerous Khitan tribes people.

44. A.D. 730-907

(1). Yaonian tribal confederation

¹³⁴ *Idem.* 6809.

¹³⁵ *Idem.* 6812-6813.

¹³⁶ *LS* 63. 955.

¹³⁷ *JTS* 9. 208.

Liao Shi vol. 32, *Account of Camping and Defending* part 2, *Tribes and Lineages* part1:

遥輦承萬榮可突于散敗之餘，更為八部；然遥輦，迭刺別出，又十部也。¹³⁸

After the defeat and dispersion, which were caused by (Sun) Wangrong and Ketuyu, the Yaonian family re-established eight tribes. However, when the Yaonian and Yila branched off from them, there were again ten tribes

遥輦八部:

旦利皆部；乙室活部；實活部；納尾部；頻沒部；納會雞部；集解部；奚嗚部。

當唐開元，天寶間，大賀氏既微，遼始祖涅里立迪輦阻里為阻午可汗。時契丹因萬榮之敗，部落凋散，即故有族眾分為八部。涅里所統迭刺部自為別部，不與其列。并遥輦，迭刺亦十部也。¹³⁹

The eight tribes of Yaonian family:

The Danlijie tribe; the Yishihuo tribe; the Shihuo tribe; the Newei tribe; the Pinmuo tribe; the Nahuiji tribe; the Jijie tribe; the Xiwa tribe.

During the period of the Kaiyuan and Tianbao in the Tang Dynasty, the Dahe family fell into decline. The earliest ancestor of the Liao Nieli enthroned Dinianzuli to be Zuwu Khaghan. Because of the failure of (Sun) Wanrong, the Khitan tribes had withered and dispersed in those years. The existing clans and tribesmen were re-organized and divided into eight tribes. The Yila tribe led by Nieli branched off from (the eight tribes). Therefore, there were ten tribes when the Yaonian and Yila were added.

(2). Twenty tribes of Zuwu khaghan

Liao Shi vol. 32, *Account of Camping and Defending* part 2, *Tribes and Lineages* part1:

阻午可汗析為二十，契丹始大。至於遼太祖，析九帳，三房之族，更列二十部。聖宗之世，分置十有六，增置十有八，并舊為五十四部；內有拔里，乙室已國舅族，外有附庸十部，盛矣！¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ *LS* 32. 376

¹³⁹ *Idem.* 379-380.

¹⁴⁰ *Idem.* 376.

Zuwu Khaghan divided them into twenty tribes, and the Khitan became great for the first time. Coming to Taizu of Liao, he separated the lineages of the Nine Tents and the Three Patriarchal Households and regrouped them into twenty tribes. During the reign of Shengzong, sixteen tribes were established by subdivision, and eighteen were set up by accretion. Including the old ones, there were fifty-four tribes. Inside (the empire) were the Imperial Maternal Uncles of the Pali and the Yishiyi lineages. Outside were the ten dependent tribes. Such Prosperity!¹⁴¹

遥輦阻午可汗二十部：

耶律七部；審密五部；八部。

涅里相阻午可汗，分三耶律為七，二審密為五，并前八部為二十部。三耶律：一曰大賀，二曰遥輦，三曰世里，即皇族也。二審密：一曰乙室己，二曰拔里，即國舅也。其分部皆未詳；可知者曰迭剌，曰乙室，曰品，曰楮特，曰烏隗，曰突呂不，曰捏刺，曰突舉，又有右大部，左大部，凡十，逸其二。大賀，遥輦析為六，而世里合為一，茲所以迭剌部終遥輦之世，強不可制云。¹⁴²

The twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan:

The seven Yelüs; the five Shenmis; the eight tribes.

When Nieli assisted Zuwu Khaghan, he divided the three Yelüs into seven and the two Shenmis into five. Adding the previous eight tribes to them, there were twenty tribes all together. The three Yelüs: the first was called Dahe, second was called Yaonian and third was called Shili, were the imperial lineages. The two Shenmis: the first was called Yishiyi and second was called Bali, were (lineages of) the Imperial Maternal Uncles. The tribal divisions are not clear. What can be known were called the Yila, Yishi, Pin, Chute, Wukui, Tulübu, Niela and Tuju. There were also the You Dabu (Right Big Tribe) and Zuo Dabu (Left Big Tribe). So there were ten tribes all together. The other two were missing. The Dahe and the Yaonian were divided into six (clans), but the Shili was merged into one. This is why the Yila tribe was too powerful to be restrained during the whole period of the Yaonian.

45. A.D. 735-745

Earliest ancestor of the Liao, Nieli

(1). *Liao Shi* vol. 2, *Account of Emperor Taizu* part 2:

¹⁴¹ This account of English translation is quoted from Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 86.

¹⁴² *LS* 32. 380-381.

傳至雅里，始立制度，置官屬，刻木為契，穴地為牢。讓阻午而不肯自立。¹⁴³

When Yali took office, he for the first time formulated institutions. (For examples), he set up officials and authorities, carved seals out of wood, and excavated caves as prisons. He resigned sovereign authority and offered it to Zuwu, but was not willing to enthrone himself.

(2). *Liao Shi* vol. 46, *Account of Officials* part 2:

遼始祖涅里究心農工之事 ... 畜牧畋漁固俗尚也。¹⁴⁴

The earliest ancestor of the Liao Nili was concerned about affairs of cultivation and handicrafts ... Hunting and fishing were the old customs, which were valued (by the Khitan people).

In the *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy*, it is recorded, "Nili was written Nili in the Yelü Yan edited *Liao Shi*, and Yali in the Chen Daren's book. He was the earliest ancestor of Liao Taizu". The name is written Nili in the *Jiu Tangshu*, and Nili in the *Zizhi Tongjian*.

46. A.D. 736-755

Conflicts with An Lushan

(1). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 214, *the third month of 736*:

張守珪使平盧討擊使，左驍衛將軍安祿山討奚，契丹叛者，祿山恃勇輕進，為虜所敗。¹⁴⁵

Zhang Shougui ordered the general of Zuo Xiao Wei An Lushan to attack the Xi and Khitan rebels. An Lushan underestimated the enemy so that he was defeated.

(2). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 215, *the first month of 742*:

置十節度使以備邊。范陽節度使，臨制奚，契丹，統經略，威武，清夷，靜塞，恒陽，北平，高陽，唐興，橫海等九軍。屯幽，薊，媯，檀，易，恒，定，漠，滄九州之境，治幽州，兵九萬一千四百人。¹⁴⁶

The ten military governors were set for defending the frontier. The military governor of Fanyang was in charge of restricting the Xi and Khitan; commanding nine armies of the Jinglue, the Weiwu, the Qingyi, the Jingsai, the Hengyang, the Beiping, the Gaoyang, the Tangxing and the Henghai. (The armies) were stationed

¹⁴³ *Idem* 2. 24.

¹⁴⁴ *Idem* 46. 730.

¹⁴⁵ ZZTJ 214. 6814.

¹⁴⁶ *Idem* 215. 6849.

within the nine prefectures of You, Ji, Gui, Tan, Yi, Heng, Ding, Mo and Cang. The administrative seat was set in Youzhou. There were 91,400 soldiers under its control.

(3). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 215, *the third month of 745*:

以外孫獨孤氏為靜樂公主，嫁契丹王李懷節；甥楊氏為宜芳公主，嫁奚王李延寵。¹⁴⁷

Emperor (Xuanzong) granted his maternal granddaughter, whose family name was Dugu, the Princess of Jingle, and married her to the Khitan king Li Huaijie. He also granted his niece, whose family name was Yang, the Princess of Yifang, and married her to the Xi king Li Yanchong.

(4). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 215, *the ninth month of 745*:

安祿山欲以邊功市寵，數侵掠奚，契丹；奚，契丹各殺公主以叛，祿山討破之。¹⁴⁸

An Lushan frequently invaded and assaulted the Xi and Khitan in order to curry favor with the Tang court. The Xi and Khitan killed the Tang princesses and rebelled against (the Tang).

(5). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 215, *the fourth month of 746*:

立奚酋娑固昭信王，契丹酋楷洛為恭仁王。¹⁴⁹

(Emperor Xuanzong) granted the Xi chief Suogu the Prince of Zhaoxin, and the Khitan chief Kailuo the Prince of Gongren.

(6). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 215, *the tenth month of 750*:

安祿山屢誘奚，契丹，為設會，飲以葇蓉酒，醉而坑之，動數千人，函其酋長之首以獻，前後數四。¹⁵⁰

An Lushan frequently lured the Xi and Khitan people (into a trap he had deliberately set in advance). He set a banquet (for the Xi and Khitan people) and let them drink Langdang wine. While (these people) were anaesthetized, they were buried alive. An Lushan had done this four times, and each time several thousand people (of the Xi and Khitan) were killed, and their chiefs' heads were presented to the Tang court.

¹⁴⁷ *Idem.* 6864.

¹⁴⁸ *Idem.* 6868.

¹⁴⁹ *Idem.* 6871.

¹⁵⁰ *Idem.* 6900.

(7). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 216, *the eighth month of 751*:

安祿山將三道兵六萬以討契丹，以奚騎二千為向導 ... 至契丹牙帳，契丹大駭 ... 奚復叛，與契丹合，夾擊唐兵，殺傷殆盡。射祿山，中鞍，折冠簪，失履，獨與麾下二十騎走；會夜，追騎解，得入師州。¹⁵¹

An Lushan commanded 60,000 troops, which were from three daos, to attack the Khitan, using two thousand of the Xi cavalymen as guides ... when they reached the Khitan's main camp, the Khitan were extremely scared ... The Xi people turned traitor and went over to the Khitan. They squeezed the Tang troops from the front and the rear simultaneously and killed or wounded almost all of (the Tang soldiers). (An) Lushan was shot, his shoes was lost. He then fled with only twenty cavalymen. It happened to be at night, so the pursuers were thrown off, and then they could get into Shizhou.

(8). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 216, *the third month of 752*:

安祿山發蕃漢步騎二十萬擊契丹，欲以雪去秋之耻。¹⁵²

In order to avenge an insult of last autumn's failure, An Lushan sent 200,000 troops, including both the Chinese and barbarian infantry and cavalry units, to attack the Khitan.

(9). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 217, *the fourth month of 755*:

安祿山奏破奚，契丹。¹⁵³

An Lushan reported that he defeated the Xi and Khitan.

47. A.D. 756-840

Tributary activities after the Zhide period

Xin Tangshu vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

故事，以范陽節度使為押奚，契丹使，自至德後，藩鎮擅地務自安，鄣戍斥候益謹，不生事於邊，奚，契丹亦鮮入寇，歲選酋豪數十入長安朝會，每引見，賜與有秩，其下率數百皆駐館幽州。至德，寶應時再朝獻，大曆中十三，貞元間三，元和中七，太和，開成間凡四，然天子惡其外附回鶻，不復官爵渠長。¹⁵⁴

¹⁵¹ *Idem* 216. 6908.

¹⁵² *Idem*. 6910.

¹⁵³ *Idem* 217. 6932.

¹⁵⁴ *XTS* 219. 6172.

According to the old practice, the military governor of Fanyang was in charge of the surveillance over the Xi and Khitan. From the Zhide period (756-758) on, the local separatist regimes concentrated on expanding their sphere of influence and taking care of their own affairs. They fortified garrisons for defense more cautiously, and no longer made troubles beyond the frontier. Therefore, the Xi and Khitan very rarely raided the borders. The Khitan annually selected several dozens of chieftains and despotic gentry to enter Chang'an for paying homage to the Tang court. While (the chieftains and despotic gentry were in audience), they were granted in accordance with their ranks. Several hundreds of subjects under those chieftains and despotic gentry had stayed in guesthouses in Youzhou. During the period from Zhide to Baoying (762-763), they came to pay tributes again; in the period of Dali (766-779), they had paid homage and present tributes thirteen times; in the period of Zhenyuan (785-805), three times; in the period of Yuanhe (806-820), seven times; and during the period from Taihe (827-835) to Kaicheng (836-840), four times. The emperors resented that the Khitan also pledged their allegiance to the Uighurs, so that no longer granted any official posts and noble titles to the Khitan chieftains.

48. The 8th-9th Centuries

Achievements of Abaoji's ancestors

Liao Shi vol. 2, *Account of Emperor Taizu* part 2:

雅里生毗牒。毗牒生頡頏。頡頏生耨里思，大度寡欲，令不嚴而人化，是為肅祖。肅祖生薩刺德，嘗與黃室韋挑戰，矢貫數禮，是為懿祖。懿祖生勻德實，始教民稼穡，善畜牧，國以殷富，是為玄祖。玄祖生撒刺的，仁民愛物，始置鐵冶，教民鼓鑄，是為德祖，即太祖之父也。世為契丹遙輦氏之夷離堇，執其政柄。德祖之弟述瀾，北征于厥，室韋，南略易，定，奚，靺，始興板築，置城邑教民種桑麻，習組織，已有廣土眾民之心。而太祖受可汗之禪，遂建國。¹⁵⁵

Yali begot Pidie. Pidie begot Hailing. Hailing begot Noulisi who was tolerant without lustfulness. Even though there were not strict laws and decrees, people were obedient (in the time of Noulisi). He was Suzu. Suzu begot Salade who had challenged the yellow Shiwei. The arrows he shot could penetrate many thin pieces of wood. He was Yizu. Yizu begot Yundeshi who was the first to teach the people to sow and reap. He was skilled in stockbreeding. The country thereby became rich. He was Xuanzu. Xuanzu begot Saladi who was humane toward people and kind toward living creatures. He was the first to establish iron smelting. He taught the people to cast. He was Dezu, who was the father of Taizu. For generations (members of this family) were the Yilijin of the Yaonian lineage

¹⁵⁵ *LS* 2. 24.

of the Khitan and held the political power. Dezu's younger brother, Shulan, attacked the Yujue and the Shiwei in the north. In the south he invaded Yi and Ding, and the Xi and Bai Xi. He was the first to practice masonry and to establish walled cities. He taught the people how to plant mulberry trees and hemp and how to weave. Already he had the ambition of making his territory large and his people numerous.¹⁵⁶

49. A.D. 842

Submission to the Tang again

(1). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

會昌二年，回鶻破，契丹酋屈戌始復內附，拜雲麾將軍，守右武衛將軍。於是幽州節度使張仲武為易回鶻所與旧舊印，賜唐新印，曰“奉國契丹之印”。¹⁵⁷

In the second year of Huichang (842), the Uighurs were destroyed. The Khitan supreme chieftain Qushu began to submit (to the Tang). He was granted the general of Yunhui and the general of You Wu Wei. Thereupon, the military governor of Youzhou Zhang Zhongwu helped them to change the old Uighur seal for a new one, which was granted by the Tang with the text of "the seal hold by the Khitan who pledge loyalty to the empire".

(2). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 246, *the ninth month of 842*:

初，奚，契丹羈屬回鶻，各有監使，歲督其貢賦，且訶唐事。¹⁵⁸

Previously, the Xi and Khitan were subordinate to the Uighurs. There were Uighur supervisors for urging (the Xi and Khitan people) to pay tributes, and for spying out the intelligence about the Tang.

50. A.D. 885-887

Conflicts with Liu Rengong

(1). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

因入寇幽，薊。劉仁恭窮師逾摘星嶺討之，歲燎塞下草，使不得留牧，馬多死，契丹乃乞盟，獻良馬求牧地，仁恭許之。復敗約入寇，劉守光戍平州，契丹以萬騎入，守光偽與和，

¹⁵⁶ The English translation from "Yizu begot Yundeshi" to the end of this paragraph is quoted from Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 149.

¹⁵⁷ *XTS* 219. 6172.

¹⁵⁸ *ZZTJ* 246. 7967.

帳飲具於野，伏發，擒其大將。群胡慟，願納馬五千以贖，不許，欽德輪重賂求之，乃與盟，十年不敢近邊。¹⁵⁹

(The Khitan) launched an invasion upon Youzhou and Jizhou. (The military governor of Lulong) Liu Rengong led his troops to attack them across the Zhaixing Range (Liu Rengong sent soldiers) and he also (sent soldiers) burn down the grass beyond the frontier. (The Khitan) had many problems grazing there and most of their horses were starved to death. The Khitan thereby appealed for peace. They were willing to tribute sturdy horses in exchange for pastures. This was permitted by (Liu) Rengong. But (the Khitan) broke their promise and raided the border again later. When Liu Shouguang was defending Pingzhou, the Khitan intruded into (Pingzhou) with ten thousand cavalry. (Liu) Shouguang pretended to make a peace alliance with them, pitching a tent for a feast in open country. The Khitan were ambushed and their chief commander was captured. The masses of the Khitan cried. They were willing to tribute five thousand horses to redeem (the captured commander). It was not permitted. Qinde (the supreme chieftain of the Khitan) sent large bribes, begging for (the release of the commander). Therefore, the peace alliance was formed. In the following ten years, (the) Khitan did not dare to move close to the border any more.

(2). *Xin Wudai Shi* vol. 72, *Appendix of the Four Barbarians* part 1 *The Khitan*:

是時，劉守光暴虐，幽，涿之人多亡入契丹。阿保機乘間入塞，攻陷城邑，俘其人民，依唐州縣置城以居之。漢人教阿保機曰：“中國之王無代者，”由是阿保機益以威制諸部而不肯代。其立九年，諸部以其久不代，共則消之。阿保機不得已，傳其旗鼓，而謂諸部曰：“吾立九年所得漢人多矣，吾欲自為一部以治漢城，可乎？”諸部許之。漢城在碣山東南灤河上，有鹽鐵之利，乃後魏滑鹽縣也。其地可植五穀，阿保機率漢人耕種，為治城郭邑屋廛市如幽州制度，漢人安之，不復思歸。阿保機知眾可用，用其妻述律策，使人告諸部大人曰：“我有鹽池，諸部所食。然諸部知食鹽之利，而不知鹽有主人，可乎？當來犒我。”諸部以為然，共以牛酒會鹽池。阿保機伏兵其旁，酒酣伏發，盡殺諸部大人，遂立，不復代。¹⁶⁰

Liu Shouguang was despotic at this time, so that the people who inhabited Youzhou and Zhuozhou fled to the Khitan. Abaoji, taking advantage of this opportunity, crossed the frontier to attack and seize the cities, and to capture the people. Following the prefectures and counties of the Tang, he built cities to settle (the Han Chinese captives). The Chinese told Abaoji, "There was no case of a Chinese ruler being replaced on the throne." Therefore Abaoji made increasing use of his power to control the tribes and refused to be replaced. After he had been

¹⁵⁹ XTS 219. 6172-6173.

¹⁶⁰ *Idem* 72. 886.

on the throne for nine years, the tribes blamed him for not being replaced for such a long time. Abaoji had to pass his banner and drum. He said to the tribes, "during the nine years of my rule I have obtained a great number of Chinese. I would like to organize an independent tribe to govern the Chinese city. Is this permissible?" The tribes permitted it. The Chinese city, situated southeast of the Tan Mountain and by the side of the Luan River, enjoyed the advantages of salt and iron. ... Its land was suitable for the cultivation of the five grains. Abaoji led the Han Chinese to cultivate the land. He also constructed a city, houses, and markets for them after the system of Youzhou. The Han Chinese were satisfied with these and had no thought of returning. Abaoji recognized that the masses (of Han Chinese) could be used by him. He use his wife Shulü's tactics to notify the chieftains of other Khitan tribes, "I have a salt pond that was used by the your tribes, but you tribes know only the benefits of eating salt so is it all right that you do not know that the salt has its owner? (You) should come to reward me". Those tribes thought that this was right. They all gathered at the salt pond with beef and wine. Abaoji laid an ambush around them. When they were drunk, they fell into the ambush. The chieftains of the other tribes were all killed. (Abaoji), therefore, enthroned himself, and was not replaced any more.

51. 860-907

Khitan's expansion

(1). *Zizhi Tongjian* vol. 266, *the fifth month of 907*:

咸通末，有習爾者為王，土宇始大。其後欽德為王，乘中原多故，時入盜邊。及阿保機為王，尤雄勇，五姓奚及七姓室韋，韃靼咸役屬之 ... 又北侵室韋，女真，西取突厥故地，擊奚滅之 ... 東北諸夷皆畏服之。¹⁶¹

Towards the end of Xiantong period (860-874), when Xi'er became the king (of the Khitan), their territory began to be expanded. Afterwards, when Qinde became the king, taking advantage of the turmoil in China, they frequently raided the borders. Up to the time of Abaoji who was more valiant, all of the five tribes of the Xi, the seven tribes of the Shiwei and the Tartar were subdued ... Furthermore, they invaded the Shiwei and Jurchen to the north, captured the old land of the Türks to the west, and destroyed the Xi ... All the northeastern barbarians surrendered to them.

(2). *Xin Tangshu* vol. 219, *Description of the Khitan*:

光啟時，方天下盜興，北疆多故，乃鈔奚，室韋，小小種落皆役屬之，因入寇幽，薊。¹⁶²

¹⁶¹ ZZTJ 266. 8678-8679.

During the Guangqi period (885-888), taking advantage of the turmoil of rebellions in the northern frontier (of the Tang), (the Khitan) plundered the Xi and Shiwei tribes and subdued all of them. Afterwards, they invaded Youzhou and Jizhou.

2.3 Notes on the Textual Material

Materials {2(1)}:

- (1). Donghu: "Donghu" was a Chinese term to call the eastern barbarians. The note 13 for the Description of the Xiongnu in the *Shi Ji* records, "Fu Qian said: 'the Donghu were the ancestors of the Wuhan and Xianbei. Since they inhabited east of the Xiongnu, they were called the eastern barbarians.'"¹⁶³
- (2). Wuhuan: The Wuhuan were an ethnic group who had lived in the Manchuria during the period of the Han Dynasty. As the Xianbei, the Wuhuan was a branch of the so-called "East Barbarians".
- (3). The Xianbei Mountains: According to Wang Zhonghan ed. *Zhongguo Minzu Shi*, the Xianbei Mountains are the modern Dahan Mountains, which is situated near the Halegu River west of Horqin Youyi Middle Banner, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region.¹⁶⁴
- (4). Maodun: Maodun was a supreme chieftain of the Xiongnu whose reign period was from 209 B.C. to 174 B.C.
- (5). Liaodong: The Liaodong refers generally to the region east of the Liao River.

Materials {5}:

- (1). Qinglong: Qinglong was the second reign period of emperor Ming of the Cao Wei Dynasty (233-237).
- (2). Bineng: In the *Sanguo Zhi* and *Tong Dian*, it is written as Kebineng.¹⁶⁵

Materials {6(1)}:

- (1). Liaoxi: Liaoxi refers roughly to the region west of the Liao River, including modern eastern part of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and western part of Liaoning Province. The region had already been established as the Liaoxi Commandery before the unification of the Qin. It became one of the thirty-six original commanderies of the Qin Dynasty (221-207 B.C.)
- (2). The Cao Wei: The Cao Wei refers to the Cao family established Wei Dynasty from 220 to 265.

Materials {6(2)}:

Kumo Xi: The Kumo Xi were a group of ethnic people who had inhabited Manchuria. According to Wittfogel & Feng, like the Khitan and Shiwei, they are supposed to be descendants of the same ancestral people, the Xianbei.¹⁶⁶ Since the time of Sui, the Kumo Xi had been simply called the Xi.

Materials {7(1)}:

¹⁶² *XTS* 219. 6172.

¹⁶³ *SJ* 110. 2885.

¹⁶⁴ Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p. 183.

¹⁶⁵ *SGZ* 30. 838; *TD* 196. 5370.

¹⁶⁶ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 22.

Songmo: According to Du You edited *Tong Dian*, the location of Songmo was in the north of Liucheng City where was the administrative seat of Yingzhou.¹⁶⁷ The modern Chinese scholar Feng Yongqian maintains that the location of Songmo should be in modern Wulan Sumu village of the Inner Mongolia Autonomic Region.¹⁶⁸

Materials {7(2)}:

Guihai: The traditional Chinese way to calculate the date within each lunar month is combining the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches. There are ten Heavenly Stems: Jia 甲, Yi 乙, Bing 丙, Ding 丁, Wu 戊, Ji 己, Geng 庚, Xin 辛, Ren 壬 and Gui 癸, and twelve Earthly Branches: Zi 子, Chou 丑, Yin 寅, Mao 卯, Chen 辰, Si 巳, Wu 午, Wei 未, Shen 申, You 酉, Xu 戌 and Hai 亥. One combination of each Heavenly Stem and each Earthly Branch is used to indicate one particular date, such as Xinhai 辛亥, Guihai 癸亥, Gengzi 庚子 and so on.

Materials {8}:

(1). The Yuguan Gate: According to Hu Sanxing's annotation for the *Zizhi Tongjian*, the Yuguan Gate was located within the territory of Shengzhou, bordering on the Türks. There was a garrison of the Yuguan Gate that was located four hundred and eighty *li* west of the city of Yingzhou.¹⁶⁹

(2). Youzhou: Youzhou was located in modern Beijing and around area. It was a military and economic basis for defending the Xi and Khitan in the time of the Tang.

Materials {15}:

Tianbao: Tianbao was the reign title of emperor Wenxuan of the Northern Qi Dynasty. The reign period of Tianbao was from 550 to 559.

Materials {16(1)}:

(1). Kedun: Kedun (Khatun) means "empress" in Mongolic and Turkic languages.¹⁷⁰ Hereby it refers to Qishou Khaghan's spouse.

(2). The Tu River: The Tu River corresponds to the modern Laoha River.

Materials {16(2)}:

(1). Mao 卯: Mao here refers to the time between five and seven o'clock in the morning.

(2). Chen 辰: Chen here refers to the time between seven to nine o'clock in the morning.

Materials {21}:

Tujue: Tujue refers to the most famous of the nomadic Turkish tribes, which entered the Chinese historical records in the middle of the 6th Century. Their home was in the Altai mountain region, concentrated in the north of Zungharia Basin and the upper reaches of the modern Yenisei River. They had been subjects of the Rouran before 552. Their leader Tumen established an empire in 552, called First Turkish Empire. Around 581, the Turkish Empire split into hostile eastern and western khaghanates. The Eastern Türks, who had very close relations with China, began to become stronger in the period of the Sui Dynasty. From then on, the Türks became the most troublesome counterpart of China until the later part of the 9th Century. In 630, the First Turkish Empire collapsed under serious attacks made by the Tang. Within a few years all remaining Turkish tribes either went over to the Tang or fled west. The Second Turkish Empire was established in 682 by Mochuo who incorporated more tribes until his empire approached the size

¹⁶⁷ *TD* 200. 5485.

¹⁶⁸ Feng, Yongqian 1989, p. 122.

¹⁶⁹ *ZZTJ* 205. 6506.

¹⁷⁰ Shiratori 1923. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1). p. 214.

of the first in its golden age, contending with the Tang Dynasty. It collapses in 840 under the attacks made by the Uighurs.¹⁷¹

Materials {24}:

Mohe: The Mohe were a group of ethnic people in Manchuria during the Tang period. It had been called Wuji in the Northern Wei period (386-534). The location of the Mohe was situated 6000 *li* (3000 km) directly northeast of the capital of the Tang. It reached the sea to the east, the Türks to the west, Korea to the south and the Shiwei to the north.¹⁷²

Materials {25}:

Shiwei: The Shiwei, like the Khitan and Xi, were descended from the Xianbei. They were first mentioned as an independent people in the *Wei Shu*¹⁷³. Their territory spread widely north of the Khitan.

Materials {26(2)}:

Sijin: Sijin was a Turkish official title.

Materials {27}:

Juqu: This personal name is called Juqu in the *Liao Shi*¹⁷⁴, but Quju in the *Xin Tangshu* and *Zizhi Tongjian*¹⁷⁵.

Materials {30}:

Wude: Wude was the reign title of emperor Gaozu who was the founder of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period of Wude was from 618 to 626.

Materials {31(2)}:

(1). Jinzi Guanglu Dafu: Guanglu Dafu was an official title. Its predecessor was Zhong Dafu in the time of the Warring States (475-221 B.C.). In the time of emperor Han Wudi (140-87 B.C.), it was called Guanglu Dafu for the first time, taking charge of consultative affairs. After the Wei and Jin Dynasties (220-420), it was gradually becoming an honorable title.

(2). Yingzhou: Yingzhou was set in Helong (modern Chaoyang City of Liaoning Province) in 438 by emperor Wei Taiwu as a base for controlling nomadic tribes in Manchuria. Its location was close to the Xi in the northwest and Khitan in the north. In the Tang Dynasty, it was a vital hub in the communication line that connected Manchuria with China Proper. It also functioned as the second frontier defense base behind Youzhou (the first frontier defense base) for protecting the northeast border of the Tang, and expansion in Manchuria.¹⁷⁶

Materials {33}:

Mohui: The *Liao Shi* vol. 63, *Table of Genealogy* records: "during the period of the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the Khitan chieftains' family name was Dahe."¹⁷⁷ Also, the *Cefu Yuanguai* vol. 977 mentions "Dahe Mohui"¹⁷⁸.

Materials {34}:

(1). Koguryō (Gaogouli) or Koryō (Gaoli): During the 7th to 10th Centuries, the Korean peninsula was in a separated situation. Three states, the Koguryō, Paekche (Baiji) and Silla (Xinluo)

¹⁷¹ *XTS* 215. 6028-6055.

¹⁷² *XTS* 219. 6177.

¹⁷³ See *WS* 100. 2221.

¹⁷⁴ *LS* 32. 379 & 63. 953.

¹⁷⁵ *XTS* 219. 6168; *ZZTJ* 199. 6256.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 99.

¹⁷⁷ *LS* 63. 950.

¹⁷⁸ *CFYG* 977.11479.

coexisted in the Korean peninsula. The Koguryŏ occupied the northern part. The southern part was divided by the Silla and Paekche. The Silla was in the northeast of the southern part and Paekche was in the southwest of it.¹⁷⁹

(2). The Sixteen Garrisons: According to the *Xin Tangshu*, the security system of forbidden city of the Tang Dynasty was called Shiliu Wei (the Sixteen Garrisons). They were Zuo (left) and You (right) Wei, Zuo and You Xiao Wei, Zuo and You Wu Wei, Zuo and You Wei Wei, Zuo and You Lingjun Wei, Zuo and You Jinwu Wei, Zuo and You Jianmen Wei, and Zuo and You Qianniu Wei. Every garrison (Wei) was set one senior general, one great general and two generals.¹⁸⁰

Materials {35}:

Ruhezhi: Ruhezhzhu was a tribal title of the Khitan, which was used in the period of the Dahe (618-730).¹⁸¹

Materials {36}:

Kuge: Li Kuge and Kuge are the same person. Li was the imperial family name of the Tang Dynasty. Kuge was granted Li as his family name after he had paid his loyalty to the Tang court in 648.

Materials {38(1)}:

The eastern capital (Dongdu): The eastern capital of the Tang Dynasty was Luoyang that corresponds to modern Luoyang City of Henan Province.

Materials {40(1)}:

(1). Yingyang Wei: Yinyang Wei was the former Wu Wei. Its name was changed into Yinyang Wei in the first year of Guangzhai (684).¹⁸²

(2). Sinong Shaoqin: Sinong Shaoqin was an official title of Sinong Si that was a bureau for taking charge of agriculture and storing foodstuff and other necessities. It was under jurisdiction of Yushi Tai that was one of the three highest official bureaus in charge of supervisory affairs in the Tang Dynasty.¹⁸³

Materials {40(4)}:

Tanzhou: Tanzhou corresponds to modern Miyun County of Beijing. It was set in the sixth year of Kaihuang (604).¹⁸⁴

Materials {40(5)}:

The Xiashi Gorge: The Xiashi Gorge was close to modern Lulong County of Hebei Province. It was combined with two parts, the east and west Xishi Gorges that were two garrisons in Pingzhou.

Materials {40(9)}:

(1). Shanyu: During the Han period, the supreme chieftain of the Xiongnu was called Shanyu.

(2). Hebei: During the Tang times, Hebei covered the area north of the Yellow River, from present Henan and Shandong Provinces up to the northern border of China Proper.¹⁸⁵

Materials {40(11)}:

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Twitchett & Wechsler. In Twitchett ed., 1979, pp. 282-85.

¹⁸⁰ *XTS* 49.1279.

¹⁸¹ *Idem* 219. 6168.

¹⁸² *Idem* 49. 1280.

¹⁸³ *Idem*. 1259.

¹⁸⁴ *ZZTJ* 205. 6506.

¹⁸⁵ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 472, footnote. 40.

(1). The subdued Turkish households: These Turkish households had come under the Tang's control in 630, after the first Turkish Empire was destroyed by the Tang. According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, after the destruction of the Türks, there were over 100,000 Turkish households, which surrendered to the Tang. After sharp arguments at the court, emperor Taizong decided to settle the Türks within the Chinese territory from Youzhou in the east to Lingzhou in the west.¹⁸⁶

(2). Xianheng: Xianheng was the seventh reign period of emperor Tang Gaozong. The duration of Xianheng is from 670 to 674.

(3). The Shanyu protectorate: The Shanyu protectorate was set in 650, just after the Tang had conquered the Turkish Chebi tribe, for settling and controlling the subdued Turkish households. There were twelve prefectures which belonged to it, they were the Sheli Prefecture, Ashina Prefecture, Chuo Prefecture, Sibi Prefecture, Baideng Prefecture, Yushe Prefecture, Yishi Prefecture, Beishi Prefecture, Chilue Prefecture, Helu Prefecture, Geluo Prefecture and Jiadie Prefecture.¹⁸⁷ The prefects and regional governors were taken by the Turkish chieftains. It was abandoned soon afterward. In 663, it was changed into "Yunzhong protectorate", and was changed back into Shanyu protectorate again in 664. Its location is roughly in the modern northern part of Hebei Province.

(4). 1 hu or shi = 19.986 liters;

1 duan or pi = 9.24 meters;

1 jin = 244 grams.¹⁸⁸

Materials {40(12)}:

You Baotao Wei: You Baotao Wei was original You Wei Wei. In the first year of Guangzhai (684), You Wei Wei was changed into You Baotao Wei.

Materials {40(16)}:

(1). The Lushui River: The Lushui River was a branch of the Baoqiu River, which came from the northern desert, passed through Lu county of Youzhou, so that it was called the Lushui River. It was roughly located near modern Beijing.

(2). Sifang Guan: Sifang Guan was set for receiving the envoys and guests from other states and took charge of foreign affairs and frontier trade affairs.

(3). The Bai Xi: The Bai Xi or Xi were some ethnic tribes that were located north of the Khitan. It was about 2,500 km northeast away from the capital of the Tang, Chang'an, which corresponds to the modern Xi'an City of Shaanxi Province. To the east, there was the Mohe; to the west was the Türks and to the south was the Khitan. During the time of the Tang Dynasty, its territory was about 1,000 square kilometers and there were mountains around it. The folk customs of the Bai Xi people were roughly the same as the Khitan'. There was a tribe of the Bai Xi, called Dulun Hejin that had 40,000 households, of which 10,000 were soldiers.

Materials {41(2)}:

(1). Huangzhang: Huangzhang referred to the Huangzhang Gorge, which was located in the west Xiashi Gorge.

(2). Yujian Wei: Yujian Wei was the former Lingjun Wei. Its name was changed into Yujian Wei by empress Wu in the first year of Guangzhai (684).

Materials {41(4)}:

Yuyang was located 100 kilometers away from Youzhou.

¹⁸⁶ *ZZTJ* 193. 6075-6077.

¹⁸⁷ *Idem* 199. 6272.

¹⁸⁸ Barfield 1989, p. 80, note. 21.

Materials {42}:

(1). The destruction of Mochuo: In the later years of Mochuo's reign, Mochuo was so self-assured of having strong military power to rely on that he mistreated his subordinates. Because of this, his subjects, particularly those subdued tribal peoples, left away from him successively. Most of them submitted to the Tang, and for instance, some tribes of Uighurs fled to Ganzhou and Liangzhou, while sixty to seventy thousand western Türks left the Turkish empire to the inland of the Tang; in 714, Mochuo's younger sister and her husband surrendered to the Tang and got many rewards from the Tang. In 715, the chieftains of ten Turkish tribes submitted to the Tang. In 716, Mochuo lost his head in an ambush laid by his enemies among the western Türks. Afterwards a serious civil war erupted within the Turkish Empire. From then on, the Turkish Empire was on the decline.¹⁸⁹

(2). Danshu Tiequan: It was also called Tiequan Danshu. It was a kind of certificate, which emperors awarded to some meritorious officials, signifying a privilege of amnesty for generations in ancient China. It was written on iron plate with cinnabar.

(3). Jun (army): The term "Jun (army)" was a name of one of the frontier garrisons in the Tang Dynasty. According to the *Xin Tangsh*'s records, "at the beginning of the Tang, of the frontier garrisons, bigger ones were called 'Jun' and smaller ones were called 'Shouzhuo', 'Cheng', 'Zhen' and so on. The top officials of the 'Jun', 'Shouzhuo', 'Zhen' and so on were called 'Shi'. These frontier garrisons were under supervise of the frontier military governors. Jinxi Jun was one of northeastern frontier garrisons for defending the Khitan.

Materials {43(1)}:

(1). Ketuyu's coups: In 720, the Khitan military chief Ketuyu rose in rebellion against the Khitan supreme chieftain Suogu. Because of the Tang' interference, the spearhead of the rebellion had turned against the Tang, making the tension more complicated. It had been lasted for fourteen years, causing series of throne-changes and murders of supreme chieftains, and conflicts with the Tang. The tribal power of the Khitan had been severely weakened for a period of time.¹⁹⁰

(2). Ketugan: In the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*, it is written as Ketuyu. The two Chinese characters "yu 于" and "gan 干" are similar in form, so that the author of the *Zizhi Tongjian* might have made a mistake. Similar circumstances have happened on "Yuyu" and "Yugan", "Tuyu" and "Tugan".¹⁹¹

Materials {43(5)}:

Chen and Wei: Chen and Wei were the Chinese princesses who married to the Khitan ruler, Suogu and the Xi ruler Li Lusu.

Materials {43(6)}:

(1). Guannei: Guannei was one of the ten Daos in the Tang Dynasty, approximately including great part of modern Shaaxi Province, modern Ningxia Autonomous Region, southeastern part of modern Gansu Province and a small part of southern Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. This area was the political and cultural center of the Tang Dynasty.

(2). Hedong: Hedong was one of the ten Daos in the Tang Dynasty, approximately including modern Shanxi Province and a small part of southern Inner Mongolia.

(3). Henan: Henan was one of the ten Daos in the Tang Dynasty, approximately including modern Henan Province, southern part of modern Shandong Province, northern part of modern Jiangsu and Anhui Provinces.

¹⁸⁹ *JTS* 194. 5172-5173; *XTS* 215. 6046-6049.

¹⁹⁰ See *XTS* 219. 6170-6172.

¹⁹¹ See *JTS* 199. 5352; *XTS* 219. 6170; *LS* 63. 954.

(4) Hebei: Hebei was one of the ten Daos in the Tang Dynasty, covering the area north of the Yellow River from present Henan and Shandong up to the northern border of China Proper.

(5) The ten Daos: The ten Daos were the administrative divisions of the Tang Dynasty, which were divided in the first year of Zhenguan (627). They were Guannei Dao, Longyou Dao, Hebei Dao, Henan Dao, Hedong Dao, Shannan Dao, Huainan Dao, Jiangnan Dao, Jiannan Dao and Lingnan Dao.¹⁹²

Materials {43(7)}:

Pinglu: Pinglu refers to the Pinglu army, which was set in Yingzhou at the beginning of Kanyuan period (713-741).¹⁹³ Since the first year of Tianbao (742), it had been under the control of the military governor of Pinglu, leading 16,000 soldiers.¹⁹⁴

Materials {43(8)}:

The Bei mountains: In the *Zizhi Tongjian*, it was called the Bai mountains.¹⁹⁵ According to the annotation made by Hu Sanxing, in the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 24), the region of the Bai mountains was inhabited by the Wuhuan. The Bai/Bei Mountains was located in the wilds beyond the Wuruan Gate.

Materials {43(9)}:

(1). Guiyi Zhou: Guiyi Zhou was set in Guangyang City of Liangxiang County in the Zongzhang period (668-670), for settling the subdued Silla (Xinluo) households. Later, it was abandoned. At this very time it was reset for settling the Xi tribes led Li Shi.¹⁹⁶

Materials {43(11)}:

Zimeng Zhou: According to the *Xin Tangshu*'s records, in Pingzhou, there were twelve garrisons of Zimeng, Bailang, Changli and so on.¹⁹⁷ So the location of Zimeng Zhou was between the northern border of Pingzhou and the southern border of the Khitan.¹⁹⁸

Materials {43(13)}:

Nieli: Nieli was a Khitan military chief during the period from 735 to 745. He was from the Yila clan of the Yishihuo tribe, which was the same clan that the Liao imperial family came from. Therefore, he was venerated as the earliest ancestor of the Khitan Liao State by the Khitan people.¹⁹⁹

Materials {44(1)}:

Dinanzuli: Dinanzuli's Chinese name was Li Huaixiu, which was granted by the Tang court.²⁰⁰

Materials {44(2)}:

(1). Taizu: Taizu was the founder and first emperor of the Khitan Liao Empire. His reign period was from 907 to 922.²⁰¹

¹⁹² *XTS* 37. 959.

¹⁹³ *ZZTJ* 213. 6790.

¹⁹⁴ *Idem* 215. 6849.

¹⁹⁵ *Idem* 213. 6797.

¹⁹⁶ *Idem*. 6798.

¹⁹⁷ *XTS* 39. 1021.

¹⁹⁸ *ZZTJ* 214. 6809.

¹⁹⁹ Shu, Fen 1984. p. 88.

²⁰⁰ *LS* 63. 955.

²⁰¹ *Idem* 1. 2-24.

(2). Shengzong: Shengzong was the sixth emperor of the Khitan Liao Empire. His reign period was from 983 to 1030.²⁰²

Materials {46(1)}:

An Lushan: An Lushan, a rebel of the Tang, was a hybridized "barbarian" born in Yingzhou. According to the *Xin Tangshu*, his mother was a Turkish Shamaness and got him by praying to Mount Zhaying²⁰³. Anything about his father has not been found in the historical data. Some scholars maintain that his father was of Sogdian origin²⁰⁴. An Lushan succeeded in gaining favor with the Tang court, so he was promoted from a petty official in charge of frontier trade affairs to a very high frontier commander wielding heavy military power in the northern frontier of China. The revolt led by An Lushan happened during the years of 755-763. It was a serious internal violence of the Tang Dynasty, a very important event in the history of the Tang Dynasty, and is regarded as a turning point in the history of the Tang from the ups to the downs.

Materials {46(2)}:

(1). The ten military governors: Hu Sanxing annotated, "the Jinglue army was stationed in the city of Youzhou, commanding thirty thousand soldiers. The Weiwu army was stationed in the city of Tanzhou, commanding ten thousand soldiers. The Qingyi army was stationed in the city of Guizhou, commanding ten thousand soldiers. The Jingsai army was stationed in the city of Jizhou, commanding sixteen thousand soldiers. The Hengyang army was stationed in the city of Hengzhou, commanding six thousand five hundred soldiers. The Beiping army was stationed in the city of Dingzhou, commanding six thousand soldiers. The Gaoyang army was stationed in the city of Yizhou, commanding six thousand soldiers. The Tangxing army was stationed in the city of Mozhou, commanding six thousand soldiers. The Henghai army was stationed in the city of Cangzhou, commanding six thousand soldiers."²⁰⁵

Materials {46(3)}:

Li Huaijie: Li Huaijie was written as Li Huaixiu in the *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*. According to the *Table of Genealogy* of the *Liao Shi*, he was the supreme chieftain of the eight tribes of the Khitan. The name Li Huaixiu was granted by the Tang court. His original Khitan name was Dinian Zuli.²⁰⁶

Materials {46(6)}:

Langdang: Langdang is a poisonous plant. Its toxicity could be increased if it is put in some alcoholic drink.

Materials {46(7)}:

(1). The three daos: The three daos here were Youzhou Dao, Pinglu Dao and Hedong Dao that were under An Lushan's control at that time.

(2). The number of troops commanded by An Lushan was "more than one hundred thousand" in the *Xin Tangshu*²⁰⁷ and "several ten thousand" in the *Jiu Tangshu*²⁰⁸.

(3). Shizhou: Shizhou was set in the territory of the Shiwei in 629, its administrative seat was in Yangshi Town of Yingzhou.

²⁰² LS 10-17. 107-206.

²⁰³ Cf. XTS 225. 6411-6420.

²⁰⁴ Eberhard 1967, p. 184; Twitchett . In Twitchett ed., 1979, p. 426.

²⁰⁵ ZZTJ 215. 6849.

²⁰⁶ LS 63. 955.

²⁰⁷ XTS 219. 6172.

²⁰⁸ JTS 199. 5353.

Materials {47}:

- (1). Zhide: Zhide was the first reign title of emperor Suzong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was from 756 to 758.
- (2). Baoying: Baoying was the fourth reign title of emperor Suzong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was 762 to 763.
- (3). Dali: Dali was the third reign title of emperor Daizong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was from 766 to 779.
- (4). Zhenyuan: Zhenyuan was the third reign title of emperor Dezong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was from 785 to 805.
- (5). Yuanhe: Yuanhe was the first reign title of emperor Xianzong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was from 806 to 820.
- (6). Taihe: Taihe was the first reign title of emperor Wenzong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was from 827 to 835.
- (7). Kaicheng: Kaicheng was the second reign title of emperor Wenzong of the Tang Dynasty. The reign period was from 836 to 840.

Materials {49}:

The Uighurs: During the period of Tianbao, the Turkish Empire was declining. Meanwhile, the Uighurs were rising. In 745, the Uighurs killed the Turkish Baimei Khaghan, and then took the place of the Türks to hold sway over the steppe. Thus, the Xi, Khitan and other smaller ethnic peoples had to submit to the Uighurs. The *Xin Tangshu* records, "afterward the territory of the Uighurs was largely extended, to the east, adjoined the Shiwei; to the west, reached the Jin Mountains (modern Altai Mountains); to the south, controlled the vast desert, covering all land of the ancient Xiongnu."²⁰⁹ On the other hand, because of An Lushan's frequent attacks on them, the Khtian were gradually moving away from the Tang. After the rebellion led by An Lushan erupted in 755, the communication between the Khitan and Tang was broken. Having been in awe of the Uighurs' strength, the Khitan submitted to the Uighurs until the destruction of the Uighur Empire in 840.

Materials {51}:

- (1). The five tribes of the Xi: According to the *Xin Tangshu*, in the Tang Dynasty, the five tribes of the Xi were: the Ahui tribe, Chuhe tribe, Aoshi tribe, Duji tribe and Yuansi tribe²¹⁰.
- (2). The seven tribes of the Shiwei: According to the annotation made by Hu Sanxing in the *Zizhi Tongjian*, originally there were over twenty tribes of the Shiwei, seven of those closed to the Khtian²¹¹. The seven tribes here were referred to the Shiwei tribes which closed to the Khtian.

²⁰⁹ *XTS* 142. 6115-6116.

²¹⁰ *Idem* 219. 6173.

²¹¹ *ZZTJ* 266. 8678.

The Origins of the Khitan

CHAPTER 3. THE ORIGINS OF THE KHITAN

3.1. Previous Studies on Khitan Ethnic Origins

To seek the answers and explanations on this issue, many attempts have been made by historians, ethnologists and linguists from a variety of different viewpoints. Yet no consensus of opinion has been forthcoming. The traditional Chinese scholars normally approach the pedigree of the Khitan from historical insights by tracing to the source of their historical origins; while the Western and Japanese experts are adept at studying the ethnic identity of the Khitan from ethnological view angles by linguistic investigations.

Opinions of the Chinese scholars.

1. The Xianbei origin. 1a. A branch of the eastern Xianbei (or Yuwen). The *Wei Shu* records that the Khitan's ancestors were of "a branch of the eastern section of the Yuwen."¹ The later compiled *Tong Dian* and *Liao Shi* follow this statement.² It was also supported by modern scholar Feng Jiasheng.³ Through historical and historical-geographical investigation, Feng Jiasheng confirmed that the Khitan were the descendants of the Yuwen who were a branch of the Xianbei. After comparing the *Description of the Khitan* with the *Description of the Kumo Xi* in the *Wei Shu*, he argued that the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Wei Shu* might have some omission in recording the origin of the Khitan. Feng Jiasheng further pointed out that, "The language in the *Description of the Khitan* is so obscure that I suspect some words has been left out".⁴ Obviously there should be some words before the sentence "(they) fled to the region of Songmo all together". Since the ancestors of the Kumo Xi were the Yuwen, and the Khitan and Kumo Xi were of the same stock, the ancestors of the Khitan were also the Yuwen as well. In addition, Feng Jiasheng added more evidence. In his words, "the *Zhou Shu* which was compiled at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty has a *Description of the Kumo Xi*, but not a *Description of the Khitan*, probably because the Yuwen and Khitan originally belong to the same ethnic stock".⁵ Going further into the geographical approach, Feng Jiasheng has observed that the habitats of the Yuwen and Khitan were approximately the same, the region of Liaoxi.⁶ Finally he stated,

¹ *WS* 100. 2222-2223.

² *TD* 200. 5485; *LS* 63. 951.

³ Feng Jiasheng 1987, pp. 9-11.

⁴ *Idem.* p. 10.

⁵ *Idem.*

⁶ See *ZS* 1.1; *LS* 60. 930.

"according to the historical and geographical facts, undoubtedly the ancestors of the Khitan were the Yuwen".⁷ This assertion is the most influential theory in the 20th Century.

1b. The Donghu origin. The *Xin Tangshu* records, "the Khitan were of Donghu origin. Their ancestors were defeated by the Xiongnu, and sought refuge in the Xianbei Mountains"⁸ The *Xin Wudai Shi* and *Qidan Guozhi* follow this argument.⁹ According to the Chinese historical records, the Donghu were predecessors of the Xianbei. The term Donghu can be firstly found in the *Shi Ji*. In note 13 of the *Description of Xiongnu*, it is annotated, the Donghu were the ancestors of the Wuhuan. Their descendants were called the Xianbei. They were inhabited east of the Xiongnu. Therefore, they were called the eastern barbarians (Donghu in Chinese).¹⁰ From the above description, it can be seen that the Donghu origin and the Xianbei origin are not contradictory at all. In other words, the Donghu origin is the same as the Xianbei origin.

1c. The Xianbei origin. In the early 1930s, through a comparative linguistic approach, the Chinese specialist Fang Zhuangyou declared the Khitan were the descendants of the Xianbei, and belonged to a type of Mongoloid in racial classification.¹¹ In the late 1970s, the scholar Yi Linzhen supported this theory, and added that the Khitan language was directly derived from the Xianbei language.¹²

2. The Xiongnu origin. The *Jiu Wudai Shi* records, "the Khitan were of ancient Xiongnu origin".¹³ The *Cefu Yuangui* and *Song Huiyao Jigao*¹⁴ follow this assertion. However, this assertion has been denied by most of Chinese scholars through the ages and strongly criticized by some modern specialists.¹⁵ According to the historical records, the Xiongnu were the remote ancestors of the Yuwen who were believed the predecessors of the Khitan. Moreover, this group of the Xiongnu had been assimilated with the Xianbei tribal confederation since the northern Xiongnu were defeated in 89. See *Materials* {3} for the historical record on this event in details. However, the opinion that "the Khitan's ancestors were the Yuwen" is still questionable,

⁷ Feng, Jiasheng, 1987, pp. 9-11.

⁸ *XTS* 219. 6167.

⁹ *XWDS* 72. 886; *QDGZ* 23. 222-223.

¹⁰ *SJ* 110. 2885.

¹¹ Fang, Zhuangyou 1930. Repr. in: Yang, Jialuo 1973, pp. 5-106.

¹² Yi, Linzhen 1979, p. 62.

¹³ *JWDS* 137. 1827.

¹⁴ *CFYG* 956. 11254; *SHYJG* 196. 7673.

¹⁵ See Zhang, Zhengming 1979; Jing, Ai 1984; Zhang, Jiuhe 1990; Wang, Zhonghan 1994.

3. The mixed Xianbei and Xiongnu origin. After comprehensively analyzing the historical records, some modern Chinese scholars believe that the Khitan people were of mixed Xianbei and Xiongnu origin.¹⁶ The evidences they have provided could be listed below: the record in the *Description of the Wuhuan and the Xianbei* of the *Hou Hanshu*, see *Materials* {3}; the record in the *Biography of Yuwen Mohuai of the Xiongnu* of the *Wei Shu*, see *Materials* {6(1)}; the record in the *Table of Genealogy* of the *Liao Shi*, see *Materials* {6(2)}; and the *Yuanhe Xingzuan* (*The Yuanhe Collection of Family Names*). The *Yuanhe Xingzuan* vol. 6, the *Yuwen* part 2 records:

(宇文)本遼東南單于之後, 有普回因獵得玉璽, 以為天授. 鮮卑俗呼天子為宇文, 因號宇文氏.¹⁷

(The Yuwen) originally were the descendants of the southern Shanyu (of the Xiongnu). Someone within them called Puhui who got a jade seal when he was hunting. This was regarded as a sign of an imperial enthronement from the heaven. According to the Xianbei tradition, the son of the heaven was called the Yuwen. Thus (Puhui) called himself the Yuwen.

Thus it can be seen that the Yuwen, to whom the Khitan had been subordinated, were an outcome of the assimilation of the Xianbei and Xiongnu. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Khitan, as vassal tribes under the eastern section of the Xianbei, the Yuwen, for a long period of time, might have contained some of the Xiongnu elements both in the ancestry and in the culture. But it does not mean that the Khitan were of mixed Xianbei and Xiongnu origin.

Opinions of the Western and Japanese scholars. According to Wittfogel and Feng's *General Introduction of History of Chinese Society, Liao (907-1125)*, the viewpoints of the Western and Japanese scholars in dealing with this issue could be summed up in the following categories:

1. The Tungus origin. After studying some Khitan words that were contained in some Chinese historical documents, Remusat and Klaproth believed that the Khitan were of Tungus origin.¹⁸ This theory was supported by Parker in his work, *A Thousand Years of the Tartars*.¹⁹ As very old and pioneering studies, their understandings on the Khitan scripts were quite superficial. Further more, the bad mistake Remusat and Klaproth made is that they erroneously equate the Tungus with the Donghu.²⁰ The same mistake was made by Pelliot.²¹ The equation was

¹⁶ See Chen, Shu 1948; Jing, Ai 1984.

¹⁷ *YHXZ* 6. 899.

¹⁸ See Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 21, note. 309.

¹⁹ Parker 1924, p. 219.

²⁰ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 22.

²¹ Pelliot 1921 in *Xiyu Nanhai Shidi Kaozheng* No. 7, 1957, p. 31.

first tentatively rejected by Parker as early as 1895 and definitely refused by Shiratori, Kurakichi after an exhaustive textual research in 1913.²² With the development of modern decipherment of the Khitan scripts, the old view has already been totally repudiated.

2. The Mongol affiliation. The Khitan's Mongol affiliation was proposed by Persian scholar Rashid ad-Din in the 14th Century.²³ A number of linguists and historians made a similar claim in the first half of 20th Century.²⁴ In addition, some Japanese specialists Murayama Hichiro, Tamura Jitsuzo, and Otagi Matuo accepted this theory in the second half of 20th Century.²⁵ The Khitan's Mongol affiliation means that the Khitan's racial type belongs to Mongoloid, but does not mean that the Khitan were the descendants of the Mongols, for the Mongol as a group of ethnic people appeared on the historical stage much later than the Khitan. The ancestors of the Mongols are believed to be the Mengwu Shiwei (Mengwa Shiwei) who appeared in history as late as in the Tang Dynasty (618-907).²⁶ Janhunen, who particularly stresses the importance of language in ethnic identification, maintains, "in comparison with other alternatives the Mongolic affiliation of Khitan appears most plausible".²⁷ By comparative linguistic studies, he takes a step further to this theory, and points out "A better term for Khitan than Mongolic would be Para-Mongolic" which had a dialectal distinction from Proto-Mongolic the language spoken by historic Mongols.²⁸

3. The mixed Mongol and Tungus. Through analysis of the eighteen Xianbei words, Shiratori and Pelliot stated that the Khitan people were Mongol mixed with the Tungus.²⁹

The above surveys carried out by the Western and Japanese scholars have made some contributions, to varying extents, in studying the linguistic affiliation of the Khitan language. However, concerning studies of the Khitan's provenance, the conclusions that were based only upon linguistic investigation seem somewhat one-sided. Just as a question that was raised by Wittfogel & Feng half a century ago, "do the Tungus elements in the Khitan language suggest an early Tungus origin for the Khitan?".³⁰ Besides, the Xianbei or the Khitan words, which the

²² Shiratori 1933, p. 18.

²³ See Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 22, note. 309.

²⁴ *Idem.* note. 311.

²⁵ Otagi 1988, p. 1, note. 1.

²⁶ *JTS* 199. 5358; *XTS* 219. 6177; Shiratori 1933, p. 38.

²⁷ Janhunen 1996, p. 143.

²⁸ *Idem.*, p. 146.

²⁹ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 22, note. 323, 324, and 325.

³⁰ *Idem.* p. 22.

surveys relied on as evidences, were few and fragmentary, and most of them were political and military titles.

The formation and development of the Khitan confederation had undergone a very long and complicated historical course, in which cultural assimilation with some other ethnic peoples had occurred. It is inevitable that the Khitan language and even folkways contained some foreign elements. As early as 89, after being defeated by a combined force of the Xianbei and Han troops, a part of the northern Xiongnu, 100,000 tents, according to the Han reports,³¹ declared themselves the Xianbei. Thus it can be seen that a branch of the Xiongnu existed among the Xianbei tribal complex from then on. Afterwards, during the period from the 6th to 9th Centuries, the Khitan fell under the influence of first the eastern Türks and then the Uighurs. Uighur influence continued to be felt even after the fall of the Uighur Empire in 840, so a Turkic-Uighur affinity could be found in many of the Khitan tribal titles.³² Furthermore, due to centuries of contact with their neighboring peoples in Manchuria who were either Mongol or Tungus speakers, it is not surprising to find some Mongol or Tungus elements in limited numbers in Khitan words. Therefore these words can hardly be used as evidence for proving the Khitan's ethnic identity.

The issue of Khitan's ethnic affiliation is so complicated that it is not easy to define simply by a linguistic approach. A criticism made by the Chinese specialist Feng Jiasheng on the linguistic studies made by those Western and Japanese scholars in 1933 stated, "(Studying) language and script could be a method (to approach the origin and ethnic affiliation of the Khitan). However, the Khitan scripts, which are available today, are only a few words. None of the modern scholars can understand their pronunciations and meanings. It is not a correct way to identify the ethnic affiliation of a certain ethnic group only by a few words of them like those scholars did."³³ To a certain extent, this is also the reason why it had been a debated issue for centuries, and even now it still remains an open question. In view of this, investigating the Khitan's origin and development is a feasible methodological consideration in revealing the feature of the Khitan's early history.

Considering the above opinions, the statement that the ancestors of the Khitan were the Yuwen, who were of mixed Xianbei and Xiongnu seems to be the most plausible explanation. However, after careful re-examination of the historical materials and consultation with other historical, anthropological and archaeological studies, it is apparent that this explanation seems still to be far from a satisfactory solution to the problem.

³¹ Cf. *HHS* 90. 2986.

³² Cf. Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 23.

³³ Feng, Jiasheng 1933. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 34.

3.2. Selected Source Critical Considerations

Most of the available historical materials concerning the origin of the Khitan can be found in *Materials* {2,3,6,7,8,}. However, some of them need to be re-examined. In *Materials* {6(2)}, the first paragraph of record quoted from the *Liao Shi* is almost entirely contrary to the historical facts. The first sentence "emperor Yan's descendants were called Gewutu" is copied from the *Zhou Shu*, which records the history of the Yuwen Xianbei founded Northern Zhou Dynasty. The Yuwen Xianbei declared that they were the descendants of emperor Yan who was one of the two legendary ancestors of Chinese people, because they were convinced that the state they established was carrying the legitimate line in Chinese history. The editors of the *Liao Shi* believed that the Yuwen were the ancestors of the Khitan, therefore this sentence is copied there because they also would like to stress the Khitan's legitimate position. However, the Yuwen Xianbei's genealogy actually had nothing to do with the Chinese legendary ancestor, emperor Yan. The origin and early history of the Yuwen Xianbei will be discussed later. The second sentence "Later, they were defeated by the Maodun khaghan, then sought refuge in the Xianbei Mountain for protection, hence they were called the Xianbei" is copied from the *Hou Hanshu*. It is a record of a phase of the early history of the Xianbei, but not that of the Yuwen. Because the incident happened around the turn of the 2nd Century, which was much earlier than the living time of Gewutu that was estimated in the second half of the 1st Century. Moreover Gewutu was an ancestor of the Yuwen, but not of the Xianbei. Obviously it was misplaced here, but changed the subject from the ancestor of the Xianbei to Gewutu. The record on the early history of the Xianbei can be found in the *Hou Hanshu*, see *Materials* {2(1)}. The third sentence "Later, having been destroyed by the Murong Yan, they were broken up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and the Khitan." is also problematic. From its context, it seems that it was the Xianbei who were destroyed by the Murong, and then were broken up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and the Khitan. The fact was that all the Murong, Yuwen, Kumo Xi and Khitan belonged to the Xianbei ethnic complex. The Murong were a branch of the Xianbei. How could the Murong attack the Xianbei, to whom they were affiliated? According to the historical record, it was the Yuwen who were attacked by the Murong. The *Wei Shu* vol. 103, *Biography of Yuwen Mohuai of the Xiongnu* records:

建國八年，晃伐逸豆歸，逸豆歸拒之，為晃所敗，殺其驍將涉亦干。逸豆歸遠遁漠北，遂奔高麗。晃徙其眾五千餘落於昌黎，自此散滅矣。³⁴

In the eighth year of Jianguo (344), (Murong) Huang attacked the Yidou Gui. Yidou Gui resisted him, and then was defeated. The valiant general (of the Yuwen) Sheyigan was killed (by Murong Huang). Yidou Gui fled far to the northern desert, and later

³⁴ *WS* 103. 2305.

sought refuge in Korea. (Murong) Huang moved more than five thousand camps of the captured Yuwen to Changli. From then on, (the Yuwen) became dispersed.

From the above record, it is clear that it should be the Yuwen who were destroyed by Murong Huang and split up into the Kumo Xi and the Khitan, but not the Xianbei who were destroyed by the Murong Yan and were broken up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and the Khitan.

Actually, after Murong Huang's attack, the Yuwen split into three parts: one led by Yuwen Gui (or Yidou Gui) fled far to the northern desert and then sought refuge in Korea; another surrendered to the Murong Yan and were settled in Changli, the capital of the Murong founded Qian Yan (the Early Yan 337-370) kingdom; and according to *Materials* {6(3)}, another fled into the region of Songmo: those were the Khitan and Kumo Xi. In order to more clearly understand the Khitan's origin and ethnic affiliation, it is necessary to briefly review the history of the Yuwen.

3.3. The Yuwen Connection

A brief history of the Yuwen. The Yuwen were of Xiongnu origin, as recorded in the *Zhou Shu* and *Wei Shu*, see *Materials* {6(1)}. The Xiongnu origin of the Yuwen is also stated by the Japanese scholar Shiratori Kurakichi and Chinese historian Zhou Yiliang.³⁵ The first ancestor of the Yuwen named Gewutu, who originally inhabited the Yin Mountains approximately in the 1st Century, was descended from the southern Xiongnu. It is recorded in the *Zhou Shu* that he "was respected by the Xianbei people and was chosen as a chief, controlling over twelve tribes for generations", because of his braveness and astuteness. Actually, in the time of Gewutu, the Yuwen still inhabited the Yin Mountains and had not yet lived together with the Xianbei. The migration south from the Yin Mountains and then settlement in Liaoxi happened in the time of Gewutu's grandson Mona. It was impossible that Gewutu was respected by the Xianbei people. Therefore the above sentence of record is questionable. In my opinion, there are two possible reasons that could rectify this mistake. Firstly, the man who was respected by the Xianbei people was not Gewutu, but his grandson Mona. Secondly, Gewutu might have been respected by the Xiongnu, but not by the Xianbei, and those "twelve tribes" were probably the Xiongnu tribes.

According to the *Hou Hanshu*, in 89 the northern Xiongnu was destroyed by a joint force made up of the southern Xiongnu, Chinese, Xianbei and Wuhuan. The remnants of the northern Xiongnu moved from the Mongolian steppe and migrated northwestward. Taking advantage of this, the Xianbei migrated to the southwest, occupying the old territory of the Xiongnu, which stretched from the

³⁵ Shiratori 1933, pp. 79-82; Zhou, Yiliang 1997, pp. 239-255.

Liao River valley in the east to the Ordos region in the west. Over one hundred thousand tents of the remnant Xiongnu remained in their old land, declaring themselves Xianbei and starting a process of assimilation with the Xianbei. Several decades later, a grandson of Gewutu, Mona, led a branch of the southern Xiongnu and migrated southward from the Yin Mountains, for the first time living in the region of Liaoxi. Exactly dating this event is impossible, because of the lack of historical source. Some modern scholars have different opinions on this issue by making varying assumptions. Wang Zhonghan states that it happened in the 1st Century.³⁶ Jing Ai assumes that it probably happened in the period of emperor Huandi of the Han (146-167).³⁷ According to the *Zhou Shu* and *Wei Shu in Materials* {6(1)}, there were nine generations from Mona to Houdougui who was destroyed by Murong Huang in 344.³⁸ It can be roughly calculated that the time of Mona probably was around the middle of the 2nd Century. Since then, the Yuwen leaders had been the rulers with control over both the Yuwen tribes and the local peoples including the Xianbei, Xiongnu, Wuhuan and others in the region of Liaoxi. After having joined the Xianbei tribal complex, they started to assimilate with the Xianbei and began to be called the Yuwen Xianbei. It also happened to be during this period that the Xianbei leader Tanshihuan divided the Xianbei into three parts, the eastern, middle and western sections.³⁹ The *Sanguo Zhi* has more details:

鮮卑檀石槐分其地為中東西三部：從右北平以東至遼，東接夫餘，貊，為東部，二十餘邑，其大人曰彌加，闕機，素利，槐頭。從右北平以西至上谷為中部，十餘邑，其大人曰柯最，闕居，慕容等，為大帥。從上谷以西至敦煌，西接烏孫為西部，二十餘邑，其大人曰置鞬，落羅，日律推演，宴荔游等，皆為大帥，而制屬檀石槐。⁴⁰

Tanshihuai of the Xianbei divided his territory into three sections: the eastern, the middle and the western. From the You Beiping to the Liao River, connecting the Fuyou and Mo to the east, it was the eastern section. There were more than twenty counties. The *darens* (chiefs) (of this section) were called Mijia, Queji, Suli and Huaitou. From the You Beiping to Shanggu to the west, it was the middle section. There were more than ten counties. The *darens* of this section were called Kezui, Queju, Murong, *et al.* From Shanggu to Dunhuang, connecting the Wusun to the west, it was the western section. There were more than twenty counties. The *darens* (of this section) were called Zhijian Luoluo, Rilü Tuiyan, Yanliyou, *et al.* These chiefs were all subordinate to Tanshihuai.

According to Yao Weizhi's study, Huaitou, mentioned in the above record, is the other Chinese transcription of the name Yuwen Mohuai. The ancestor of the

³⁶ Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p. 193.

³⁷ Jing, Ai 1984. Repr. in: Sun Jinji 1988 (vol. 1), p. 23.

³⁸ *WS* 103. 2305.

³⁹ *HHS* 90. 2989-2990.

⁴⁰ *SGZ* 30. 837-838, note. 1.

Yuwen, therefore, was one of the four *darens* of the eastern section of the Xianbei in the time of Tanshihuai.⁴¹

The Yuwen leader was appointed the ruler of the eastern section, or at least one of the rulers of the eastern section. See *Materials* {6(1)}. After the dissolution of the Xianbei tribal complex led by Tanshihuan, the Yuwen gradually became an independent tribal group. This was probably at the turn of the 3rd Centuries. It could be inferred that the Yuwen tribal confederation, at that time, included not only the Yuwen tribes themselves, but also the Xianbei and other local peoples who had assimilated with the Xianbei.

In the time of the Cao Wei Dynasty (220-265), there was a relatively smooth relationship between the Yuwen and the Cao Wei. As recorded in the *Zhou Shu*, "the Yuwen was a maternal uncle-nephew state of the Cao Wei"⁴². It implies that the Yuwen were vassal people of the Cao Wei. The *Sanguo Zhi* records the relations between the eastern section of Xianbei and the Cao Wei, it reads:

素利, 彌加, 厥機皆為大人, 在遼西, 右北平, 漁陽塞外, 道遠初不為邊患, 然其種眾多於比能. 建安中, 因閭柔上貢獻, 通市, 太祖皆表寵以為王. 厥機死, 又立其子沙末汗為親漢王. 延康初, 又各遣使獻馬. 文帝立素利, 彌加為歸義王. 素利與比能更相攻擊. 太和二年, 素利死, 子小, 以弟成律歸為王, 代攝其眾.⁴³

Suli, Mijia and Jueji were all the *darens* (chiefs). They resided in Liaoxi, You Beiping and Yuyang beyond the northern border of China Proper. Because they were far away (from the Cao Wei, they initially were not the border trouble. Yet their population was larger than that of Bineng. During the Jianan period (196-220), because Yanrou paid tributes, they were allowed to trade. Emperor Taizu was especially fond of them and granted them noble titles. When Jueji died, his son Shamohan succeeded (his position) and was granted to be Prince of Qinhan (pro-Han Chinese). At the beginning of the year of Yankang (220), they sent missions to tribute horses (to the Cao Wei court) respectively. Emperor Wendi again granted Suli and Mijia to be Prince of Guiyi (allegiance and righteousness). Suli and Bineng attacked each other. In the second year of Taihe (228), Suli died. Because his son was too young to succeed, his younger brother was enthroned to be the king, ruling their people.

The Xianbei tribes, which lived in Liaoxi, You Beiping and Yuyang, were identical to the eastern section of the Xianbei.⁴⁴ The above description provides some information about the Cao Wei relations with some chiefs of the eastern section of the Xianbei, Suli, Mijia, and Jueji. It can be seen that Suli, Mijia, and Jueji had tribute-bestowal relations with the Cao Wei. In return, they were allowed to trade with the Cao Wei on the borders, and got supports from the Cao Wei while fighting with other Xianbei tribes led by Kebineng and Budugen. According to the *Wei Shu*, the Yuwen had been chiefs of the eastern section for

⁴¹ Yao, Weizhi 1962, p. 168.

⁴² ZS 1. 1.

⁴³ SGZ 30. 840.

⁴⁴ *Idem.* 838.

generations. See *Materials* {6(1)}. In addition, it has been proved that Huaitou, one of the chiefs of the eastern section of the Xianbei recorded in the above quotation from the *Wei Zhi*, is identical to Yuwen Mohuai. Unfortunately the relations between Huaitou and the Cao Wei are not directly recorded in the historical sources. However, It could be tentatively inferred that as a branch of the eastern section of Xianbei led by Huaitou, the Yuwen probably had similar relations with the Cao Wei, as the other branches of the eastern section of the Xianbei.

At the turn of the 4th Century, under the leadership of Mogui, the Yuwen tribes reached the apex of their power. They made frequent attacks on Morong Gui. Mogui "called himself Shanyu, all the tribes beyond the northern border of China Proper, therefore, were in fear of him"⁴⁵. Their territory was expanded. It extended from Rudong (modern Luanhe County of Hebei Province) in the west to Liucheng (modern Chaoyang City of Liaoning Province) in the east, including the modern Shira Muren River valley and the Laoha River valley⁴⁶, which was the homeland of the Khitan people in the period from the 4th to 9th Centuries.

In the time of Mogui's son Xunniyan (Xiduguan), the Yuwen continued to fight with the Murong. In the second year of Taixing of the Jin (319), Xunniyan mounted a campaign against the Murong in Bocheng (modern northwest of Jin County or Yi County of Liaoning Province), the capital of the Murong. Unfortunately they fell into an ambush planned by the Murong, because of underestimating the enemy. After being defeated by the Murong, and in order to get protection under a stronger power in Manchuria, Xunniyan sent envoys and paid tributes to the Tuoba founded Northern Wei, Xunniyan then married to emperor Zhaodi's daughter.⁴⁷

Xunniyan died and was succeeded by his son, Qidegui. Qidegui submitted to the Jie established Later Zhao. In the third year of Taining (325), under the order of Shi Le (ruler of the Later Zhao), Qidegui attacked the Murong in Liaodong. Finally the Yuwen were defeated. Enormous wealth and tens of thousands of households were captured by the Murong.⁴⁸ In the eighth year of Xianhe (333), a man from another Yuwen tribe, Yidougui, murdered Qidegui, and made himself the leader. He continued to fight with the Murong. In the eighth year of Jianguo (344), Murong Huang made a campaign against Yidougui. The Yuwen were defeated disastrously again by the Murong. Afterward, Yidougui fled far to the northern desert, and then sought refuge in the Koguryō (Gaogouli). Murong Huang moved over five thousand (fifty thousand in the *Jin Shu*) Yuwen house-

⁴⁵ *WS* 103. 2304.

⁴⁶ *Cf.* Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p. 193.

⁴⁷ *Cf.* *WS* 103. 2304.

⁴⁸ *JSU* 109. 330.

holds to Changli (modern Yi County of Liaoning Province), the capital of the Murong. From then on, the Yuwen disintegrated.⁴⁹ In addition, according to the *Wei Shu*, the other branch of the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi and Khitan, fled to the region of Songmo.⁵⁰ In the latter half of the 6th Century, Yuwen Tai, a descendant of the Yuwen founded the short-lived Northern Zhou Dynasty (557-581).

The Language and Customs of the Yuwen. The *Weishu* has recorded the origin and folk customs of the Yuwen. This record of folk customs of the Yuwen, is supposed to be unique one in the Chinese historical data. See *Materials* {6(1)}. In this record, there is a sentence "(language of the Yuwen) differed widely from that of the Xianbei". It clearly states that the Yuwen and Xianbei had different languages. Obviously this is a piece of very important information when in studying the origin of the Khitan. Unfortunately it is simply ignored by the previous researchers.

According to *Materials* {6(1)}, the Yuwen originally were the remote relatives of the southern Shanyu of the Xiongnu. Therefore, the language of the Yuwen might have shared the same linguistic stock with that of the Xiongnu. The linguistic affiliation of the Xiongnu has not been directly recorded in the historical data. However, the Xiongnu's relations with the Türks and Uighurs are recorded in the following historical sources: The *Sui Shu* vol. 84, *Description of the Türks*:

突厥之先, 平涼雜胡也, 姓阿史那氏 ... 其俗... 被髮左衽, 賤老貴少 ... 大抵與匈奴同俗.⁵¹

The ancestors of the Türks were hybrid barbarians, their family name was Ashina Their folk customs ... were loosed hung down hair, left-sided opening of garment front, and valuing the young but not the old. (They) had the similar customs to the Xiongnu .

The *Bei Shi* vol. 99, *Description of the Türks*:

突厥, 其先居西海之右, 獨為部落, 蓋匈奴之別種也, 姓阿史那氏 ... 其俗 ... 猶古之匈奴.⁵²

The Türks, whose ancestors had inhabited east of the West Sea with their owe tribes. They were another branch of the Xiongnu, and named Ashina ... Their folk customs were almost the same as that of the Xiongnu.

The *Jiu Tangshu* vol. 195, *Description of the Uighurs*:

回紇, 其先匈奴之裔也. 在後魏時, 號鐵勒部落.⁵³

⁴⁹ *WS* 103. 2305.

⁵⁰ *Idem* 100. 2222-2223.

⁵¹ *SS* 84. 1863-1864.

⁵² *BS* 99. 3285, 3287.

⁵³ *JTS* 195. 5195.

The ancestors of the Uighurs were the descendants of the Xiongnu. In the time of the Later Wei (Northern Wei), they were called the Tiele tribes.

The *Xin Tangshu* vol. 215 part 1, *Description of the Türks*:

突厥阿史那氏，蓋古匈奴北部也。⁵⁴

The Ashina family of the Turk probably were the northern tribes of the ancient Xiongnu.

From the above records, it can be seen that the Xiongnu closely relates to the Türks and the Uighurs in folk customs and successive relationships. In addition, the well preserved Turkic and Uighur inscriptions fully prove that both the Turkic and Uighur languages belong to the ancient Turkic, which is the eastern branch of Turkic linguistic family.⁵⁵ It could then be tentatively inferred that the Xiongnu language probably also belongs to, or is a branch of the Turkic linguistic family. This opinion is also shared by the Chinese scholars He Xingliang and Feng Jiqin.⁵⁶ In addition, Finnish expert Juha Janhunen concretely claims, "the Xiongnu spoke an early form of Bulghar Turkic".⁵⁷ Another conjecture could be made that the language of the Yuwen might have been the same as or similar to that of the Xiongnu, but completely distinct from that of the Xianbei.

As for the hairstyle, the Yuwen adopted the Xianbei custom, the partly shaved hairstyle (*kunfa* in classic Chinese), after they migrated from the Yin Mountains to the land of the Xianbei in the middle of the 2nd Century.⁵⁸ According to the record in the *Sui Shu*, the hairstyle of the Türks was hung down loosely (*pifa* in Chinese). Since they "had similar customs to the Xiongnu", the hairstyle of the Xiongnu might have been also *pifa*. Archaeological evidence also proves that the hairstyle of Xiongnu was *pifa*.⁵⁹ The hairstyle *kunfa* was the tradition of the southern branch of the eastern barbarians.⁶⁰ In the historical records and archaeological discoveries, the Wuhuan, Xianbei, and most branches of the descendants of the eastern section of the Xianbei, used such a hairstyle.⁶¹ The northern section of the Xianbei, the Tuoba, however, used a hairstyle of *suofa*,⁶² which means loosely hung down hair (*pifa*)⁶³ or braided hair (*Bianfa*).⁶⁴

⁵⁴ XTS. 215. 6028.

⁵⁵ Yi, Linzhen 1979, p. 57.

⁵⁶ Cf. He, Xingliang, 1982, pp. 3-11; Feng, Jinqin 1984. Repr. in: Sun Jinji 1988 (vol. 1), p. 827.

⁵⁷ Janhunen 1996, p. 186.

⁵⁸ Cf. ZS 1. 1 & 103. 2304; Jing, Ai 1984. rRepr. in: Sun Jinji 1988 (vol. 1), p. 23.

⁵⁹ Li, Yiyou 1983.

⁶⁰ Zhang, Jiuhe 1990, p. 44.

⁶¹ Cf. SJ 110. 2885, note. 13; HHS 90. 2985; Li, Yiyou 1983.

⁶² NQS 57. 983.

⁶³ Zhang, Jiuhe 1990, p. 46.

In short, after having migrated from the Yin Mountains to the land of the eastern section of the Xianbei, the Yuwen adopted some folk customs of the eastern Xianbei, such as the hairstyle of *kunfa*, while preserved some of their own culture, such as language, which would belong to the Turkic linguistic family of Altaic.

The linguistic affiliation of the Khitan. The issue of the Linguistic affiliation of the Khitan has led to shape debate among historians and linguists for over one century. Their views can be generally summarized into the following categories:

1. Near Tungusic languages. After studying some Khitan words preserved in the *Liao Shi*, the French scholar Remusat believes that the Khitan language belongs to the Tungusic languages as Jurchen, for the Khitan and the Jurchen inhabited the same territory.⁶⁵ Also by studying some Khitan words preserved in the Chinese historical data, Klaproth considered that Khitan was similar to Manchu, which is also believed to be a Tungusic language.⁶⁶ This theory was supported by Parker.⁶⁷ Added weight was given by German scholar Schott's belief that Khitan closed to Jurchen and Manchu.⁶⁸

2. The Mongolic affiliation. In the *Hairi Lou Zhacong* vol. 2, *The Languages of the Xianbei and the Mongol*, Shen Zengzhi states that Khitan belongs to the Mongolic linguistic family of Altaic, as it is very similar to Mongolic.⁶⁹ By analyzing the historical materials and by comparative linguistic studies, the Japanese scholars Shiratori and Osada also claimed that Khitan belongs to the Mongolic linguistic family of Altaic, but not Manchu and other languages similar to Manchu.⁷⁰ Its Mongolic affiliation is also supported by some modern Chinese scholars. After comparing some Khitan words preserved in the Chinese historical records and some deciphered Khitan Small Scripts with the words of other Altaic languages, Liu Fengzhu concludes that most of the pronunciations of the Khitan words whatever recorded in the historical documents or of the deciphered Khitan Small Scripts are the same as or similar to the words of the other languages, which belong to the Mongolic linguistic family. Khitan inevitably contains some Turkic, Manchu and even Chinese elements, due to the ethnic and cultural interactions between the Khitan and their neighboring ethnic peoples over centuries.⁷¹ Besides

⁶⁴ Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p. 195.

⁶⁵ See Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 22.

⁶⁶ *Idem.*

⁶⁷ Parker 1924, p. 219.

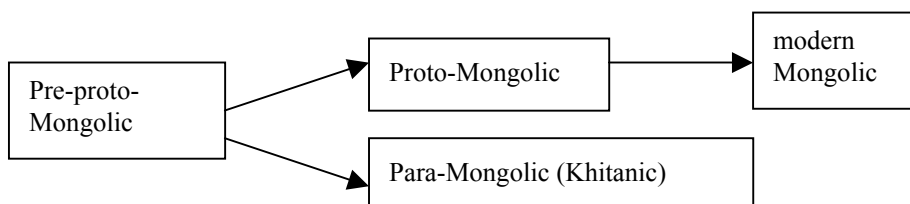
⁶⁸ See Feng, Jiasheng 1987. p. 9.

⁶⁹ See Feng, Jiqin 1984. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 827.

⁷⁰ See Liu, Fengzhu 1992.

⁷¹ *Idem.*

Liu Fengzhu, this theory is also held by Hu, Zhenhua 1978, Yi, Linzhen 1979, Gao, Lujia 1988, Qinggertai 1985, Zhang, Jiuhé 1990 and some other Chinese scholars. Furthermore after accepting the Mongolic identity of Khitan, Finnish scholar Janhunen puts this argument forward. Firstly, he chronologically classifies the Mongolic language into detailed categories. It could be showed graphically as following:



And then, he explains that Pre-Proto-Mongolic would be ancestral to the latter ones and Khitan could have been an archaic form of Proto-Mongolic, but not directly ancestral to Proto-Mongolic. Because there have had innovations. Khitan may well have been a dialectal distinction from Proto-Mongolic, which was spoken by the historic Mongols. He finally concludes, "A better term for Khitan than Mongolic would be Para-Mongolic, implying that it was probably a language collateral to the ancestor of all the actual Mongolic languages".⁷²

3. The Mongolic with Tungusic elements or Tungusic mixed with Mongolic element. After briefly analyzed a vocabulary of some two hundred known Khitan words, Twitchett & Tietze conclude, "The Chitan (Khitan) may have spoken either a proto-Mongol language influenced by Tungusic vocabulary or a Tungusic language influenced by Mongol vocabulary, in either case using many Turkic loan words".⁷³

4. Not an Altaic language. German Scholar Doerfer, who was a representative of "Anti-Altaist", has even argued, "Khitan was not an Altaic language at all but was an isolated language that has died out since".⁷⁴

Presently, the theory of the Mongolic affiliation of Khitan is more and more commonly accepted by both the eastern and western scholars.⁷⁵ In spite of this, it needs to be made clear that Khitan is an independent language that belongs to the

⁷² Janhunen 1996, pp. 145-146.

⁷³ Twitchett & Tietze. In Franke & Twitchett, eds., 1994, p. 46.

⁷⁴ Cf. Franke. In Sinor ed., 1990, p. 407, and note. 6.

⁷⁵ Cf. *Idem*; Liu, Fengzhu 1992, p. 1; Janhunen 1996, p. 143.

Mongolic linguistic family, or as Janhunen inferred that "it was probably a language collateral to the ancestor of all the actual Mongolic languages".⁷⁶

Difference between the Languages of the Yuwen and Khitan. According to previous studies, the Xianbei language shares the common ancestral linguistic origin with Mongolic.⁷⁷ In addition, Khitan belongs to the Mongolic linguistic family of Altaic.⁷⁸ From this, we can be certain that both the Khitan and Xianbei languages have some close relations with Mongolic, so that they might have been derived from the same linguistic stock. Therefore, the sentence "(the Yuwen language) differed widely from that of the Xianbei" also suggests that the language of the Yuwen was different from that of the Khitan. Furthermore it could be inferred that the origin of the Khitan and the Yuwen might be different.

Another evidence also could indirectly prove the statement that languages of the Yuwen and the Khitan were different. The Dunhuang Documents, P. 1283 (in Tibetan) records a piece of very important information about Khitan:

其(契丹)語言與吐谷渾大體相通.⁷⁹

The language (of the Khtian) and that of the Tuyuhun could generally communicate with each other.

The Tuyuhun, who migrated to the west at the end of the 3rd Century, were a branch of the Murong Xianbei.⁸⁰ The above record suggests that the Khitan language had close links with that of the Xianbei. Since the language of the Xianbei shares the common ancestral linguistic origin with Mongolic, Khitan was also derived from a linguistic stock related to Mongolic. Even though the Khitan and Tuyuhun were extremely far away from each other geographically, their languages still could generally communicate with each other. The only explanation is that they were derived from a common origin, the Xianbei.

3.4. The Ethnic Affiliation of the Khitan and Relations with the Kumo Xi

"biezhong" and "yizhong tonglei". In the *Description of Kumo Xi of the Wei Shu*, it is recorded that "The ancestors of the Kumo Xi state were of a branch (*biezhong*) of the eastern section of the Yuwen", refer to the *Wei Shu* in *Materials* {6(3)}. In the *Description of the Xi of the Bei Shi*, there is a similar record,

⁷⁶ Janhunen 1996, p. 146.

⁷⁷ See Shiratori 1933; Ma, Changshou 1962; Yi Linzhen 1984; Zhang, Jiuhé 1990.

⁷⁸ See The linguistic affiliation of the Khitan. 2. The Mongol affiliation of this section.

⁷⁹ Wang, Yao & Chen, Jian 1983, p. 162.

⁸⁰ Cf. *WS* 101. 2232.

奚本曰庫莫奚, 其先東部胡宇文之別種也。⁸¹

The Xi originally were called the Kumo Xi. Their ancestors were a branch (*biezhong*) of the eastern barbarians, the Yuwen.

In the *Wei Shu*, there is another record that "The Khitan state was located east of the Kumo Xi. They were of different origins but belonged to the same kind of people. Both of them fled to the region of Songmo", refer to *Materials* {6(3)}.

The above two records, which are often used to prove that both the Khitan and Kumo Xi were the descendants of the Yuwen, actually also implied that these two peoples were not the direct descendants of the Yuwen, but the "*biezhong*" of them; furthermore the Khitan and Kumo Xi were not derived from the same ethnic origin, but "*yizhong tonglei*". The following are some explanations of the two terms "*biezhong*" and "*yizhong tonglei*"

1. "***biezhong***". In the above records, the term "*biezhong*" means "another kind of", "another origin" and "another ethnic stock" in classic Chinese. Chen Shu supposes, " 'another tribe (*biebu*)' probably means a vassal, or a branch of the same ethnic group."⁸² Jing Ai believes that "*Zhong*" corresponds to "tribe", and then "*biezhong*" means "another tribe"⁸³. The "*bie*" here also could be understood as "collateral", opposite to the "*zheng*" that means "original", "main" or even "legitimate". All in all, "*biezhong*" emphasizes the difference between the Yuwen and the other specific peoples who had some sorts of relationship with them.

As discussed in 3.3., the Yuwen chiefs controlled not only the Yuwen tribes that moved from the Yin Mountains and their descendants, but also the local Xianbei tribes who had lived in Liaoxi since the beginning of the 2nd Century B.C. Some other peoples including the Xiongnu, Wuhuan, *etc.* who submitted to and had assimilated with the Xianbei, were also under their control. Therefore, in my contention, "*biezhong*" emphasizes that the so-called "*biezhong*" including the Khitan and Kumo Xi was different from the Yuwen. It probably refers to some other tribes that were under the Yuwen leaders' control, besides the Yuwen tribes themselves. As Chen Shu claims, "It seems that we cannot be sure that another kind of the Yuwen is the same as the Yuwen."⁸⁴ Furthermore, the Japanese specialist Shiratori Kurakichi clearly states, "The Yuwen were of Xiongnu origin, but their subjects were the Xianbei"⁸⁵. In addition, concerning the ethnic affiliation of the Khitan, there is a piece of important information recorded in the

⁸¹ *BS* 94. 3126.

⁸² Chen, Shu 1948, p. 28.

⁸³ Jing, Ai 1984. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 22.

⁸⁴ Chen Shu 1948, p. 28.

⁸⁵ Shiratori 1933 part 2, p. 82.

Inscription on Memorial Tablet of Yelü Yuzhi, which was excavated from a Liao tomb in Chifeng City of Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region in 1992, it reads:

公諱羽之姓耶律氏其先宗分佶首派出石槐歷漢魏隋唐已來世為君長⁸⁶

His first name is Yuzhi and surname is Yelü. His ancestor was Jishou who was derived from Shihuai. (The Yelü family) had been supreme rulers for generations from the Han and Wei times to the Sui and Tang Dynasties.

According to Gai Zhiyong's study, Jishou is identical with Qishou, the earliest ancestor of the Khitan; and Shihuai is identical to Tanshihuai, the Xianbei supreme chief in the period of the Eastern Han (25-220).⁸⁷ Therefore, from the sentence "His ancestor was Jishao who was derived from Shihuai" in the above inscription, it can be simply seen that the Khitan originated from the Xianbei. Since the excavated inscription on memorial tablet can be regarded as a firsthand historical source, this piece of information is quite reliable. According to Janhunen, the Xianbei "may still have spoken a uniform language remaining at the level of Pre-Proto-Mongolic".⁸⁸ Khitanic, which is identified Para-Mongolic, is believed by Janhunen to be a subdivision of Pre-Proto-Mongolic.⁸⁹ In addition, the Chinese specialist Zhang Zhengming states, "an old Khitan legend believes that the ancestor (of the Khitan) rose to power in the Muye Mountain; and a superstitious ideology of the Khitan believes that the spirit of a person will go back to the Hei Mountain after he/she dies. Since both the Muye Mountain and the Hei Mountain were located in the old lands of the Xianbei, it could help to illustrate that the Khitan originated from the Xianbei, but not the Xiongnu".⁹⁰ This statement also proves that the Khitan originated from the Xianbei from a different viewpoint. Consulting the other historical records on the origin of the Khitan and the above analysis on "*biezhong*", it could be concluded that the Khitan originated from a branch of the Xianbei who were the local Xianbei tribes which had lived in the region of Liaoxi since the 2nd Century B.C., and later were under the Yuwen's control after the leaders of the Yuwen were appointed the chiefs of the eastern section of the Xianbei.

2. "*yizhong tonglei*" and the Origin of Kumo Xi. The term "*yizhong tonglei*" in *Materials* {6(3)} is used to describe the ethnic relationship between the Khitan and Kumo Xi. In Chinese, "*zhong*" means "race" or "kind, sort and type"; while

⁸⁶ The Memorial Tablet Inscriptions of Yelü Yuzhi, Quoted from Gai, Zhiyong 2001, p. 40

⁸⁷ Gai, Zhiyong 2001, p. 41.

⁸⁸ Janhunen 1996, p. 187.

⁸⁹ *Idem.*

⁹⁰ Zhang, Zhengming 1979, p. 2.

"lei" means "kind, type", or "class, classification, and category". Generally the connotation of "lei" is wider than that of "zhong".

With regard the interpretation of the term "*yizhong tonglei*", there are a variety of different viewpoints among scholars. After analyzing some examples in the historical records that mentioned "zhong" and "lei", Jing Ai claims that "lei" means "ethnic group", while "zhong" means "tribe". Therefore, saying that the Khitan and Kumo Xi were "*yizhong tonglei*" means that "the Khitan and Kumo Xi belonged to the same ethnic group, but different tribes".⁹¹ Feng Jiqin also provides his own interpretation to "*yizhong tonglei*". He maintains, "The saying that the Xi and Khitan were '*yizhong tonglei*' means that both of them belonged to the same community earlier, and split into two groups later."⁹² Contrary to the above two opinions, Zhang Jiuhe believes that "*yizhong tonglei*" means that the Khitan and Kumo Xi "had a different ethnic origin, but shared the same life style and folk customs".⁹³

In my point of view, Zhang Jiuhe's opinion is relatively plausible, even though no any evidence and further explanation have been provided. In the above discussion, an assumption has been made that the origin of the Khitan might have been some tribes among the eastern Xianbei who had been lived in Liaoxi since the 2nd Century B.C. and under the control of the Yuwen after the 2nd Century. Concerning the origin of the Kumo Xi, there is a sharp debate among scholars. Most of Chinese scholars believe that the Kumo Xi had the same origin as the Khitan. So that the Kumo Xi were either a branch of the eastern Xianbei (or Yuwen), or of Donghu origin, or of Xiongnu origin, or of mixed Xianbei and Xiongnu origin.⁹⁴ Without offering any evidence, Zhang Jiuhe states that the Kumo Xi were the descendants of the Xiongnu, precisely, a part of the remnants of the northern Xiongnu who joined the Xianbei tribal complex and declared themselves the Xianbei, after the northern Xiongnu were defeated by a joint attack by the Han, southern Xiongnu, Xianbei and Wuhuan.⁹⁵ According to the *Description of the Xi* of the *Xin Tangshu*, the Xi were descendants of Tadun who had been the supreme leader of the Wuhuan at the turn of the 3rd Century.⁹⁶ The Xi, therefore, were of Wuhuan origin. See 6.2. of Chapter 6 for more explanations.

Since both the Wuhuan and Xianbei were of Donghu origin, sharing the same language,⁹⁷ it is no surprise that the Khitan and Kumo Xi spoke the same

⁹¹ Jing, Ai 1984. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 22.

⁹² Feng, Jiqin 1984. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 828.

⁹³ Zhang, Jiuhe 1990, p. 46.

⁹⁴ See 3.1. of this chapter.

⁹⁵ *Idem.*

⁹⁶ *XTS* 219. 6173.

⁹⁷ *Cf. HHS* 90. 2985.

language as the *Wei Shu* suggested.⁹⁸ In the *Wudai Huiyao*, it is recorded, "The language (of the Xi) was a little bit different from that of the Khitan".⁹⁹ This theory is speculatively attested by Janhunen. He describes the relationship between Khitan and the languages spoken by the immediate neighbors of the Khitan, by saying "Some populations (includes the Xi and Kumo Xi) in the vicinity of the Khitan may well have spoken Para-Mongolic idioms distinct from the Khitan language".¹⁰⁰ Therefore, in my opinion, the "*yizhongng tonglei*" indicates that the Khitan and Kumo Xi were of different origins, but they became the same race of people later. This is because they had a similar cultural background and later both became vassals of the Yuwen, and belonging to the Yuwen tribal complex together, even though they originated from different ethnic group.

Racial Type of the Khitan. By physical anthropological studies using archaeological findings, some scholars suggest that the Khitan people might belong to the Mongoloid types. After measuring the physical feature of the Khitan female mummy found in Tomb no. 6 excavated in Haoqianying of Inner Mongolia, Ji Chengzhang states that the basic characteristics of this female mummy belong to the southern Asian Mongoloid mixed with the eastern Asian Mongoloid.¹⁰¹ Zhu Hong, in his article "Qidan Zu de Renzhong Leixing jiqi Xiangguan Wenti (The Racial Type of the Khitan and Related Problems)", claims that the racial type of the Khitan can be identified as the Siberian (north Asian) Mongoloid. Firstly, after synthesizing the results of the physical anthropological analysis on skulls excavated from some Khitan tombs in Haoqianying and Shanzuizi of Inner Mongolia, he concludes that according to the measurement and survey on those excavated Khitan skulls, the racial type of the Khitan could be included into the Siberian (the northern Asian) Mongoloid, even though some of the samples contain some elements of the eastern Asian Mongoloid and the Arctic (the north-eastern Asian) Mongoloid. Furthermore he points out that these hybridized racial elements are probably caused by intermarriages between the Khitan and the other ethnic peoples. Secondly, through comparing the excavated Khitan skulls with those of the Xianbei, Xiongnu and the other ancient ethnic peoples by using a method of quantitative analysis, he describes that the calculated approximate coefficient of each pair of ethnic groups indicates that the Khitan were more close to the Xianbei than the other ancient ethnic groups in physical feature.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ *WS* 100. 2221.

⁹⁹ *WDHY* 28. 452.

¹⁰⁰ Janhunen 1996, p. 147.

¹⁰¹ Ji, Chengzhang 1983, p. 14.

¹⁰² Zhu, Hong 1991, p. 39.

According to the results of linguistic studies, the language of the southern branch of the Xianbei has a common origin with Mongolic,¹⁰³ while the language of the northern branch of the Xianbei represented by the Tuoba has a very close relationship with Mongolic.¹⁰⁴ From this, a proposal could be made that the Xianbei probably belonged to a certain branch of Mongoloid. Some archaeological studies have also indicated that the physical feature of the Xianbei skulls contains mainly the elements of the Siberian Mongoloid, or the Siberian Mongoloid mixed with the Eastern Asian Mongoloid or the Arctic Mongoloid.¹⁰⁵

Therefore, from the view of physical anthropology, the Khitan generally belonged to Mongoloid, and a common racial origin with the Xianbei. Moreover, the Khitan might not have been the direct descendants Yuwen who originated from the Xiongnu, even though their physical features might have contained some Xiongnu elements.¹⁰⁶

In addition to the above historical, linguistic, and anthropological evidences, studies on the Khitan material culture also reveals that the Khitan were direct descendants of the Xianbei. Through studies on physical remains of the Khitan that were excavated from some early Khitan tombs, Zhang Bozhong claims, "the early culture of the Khitan developed directly from inheriting the Shegen culture (the name of early culture of the Xianbei)".¹⁰⁷

Summing up the above understandings on the available historical sources, synthetical analyses on the achievements of linguistic, and archaeological and anthropological studies, and some reasonable conjectures, a logical conclusion on the Khitan origin could be drawn that the Khitan originated from a branch of the eastern section of the Xianbei, a part of the Xianbei people who had lived in Manchuria since the 2nd Century B.C., but not the direct descendants of the Yuwen.

¹⁰³ Zhang, Jiuhe 1990, p. 45.

¹⁰⁴ *Idem.* p. 46.

¹⁰⁵ Zhu, Hong 1991, p. 37.

¹⁰⁶ *Idem.* p. 40.

¹⁰⁷ Zhang, Bozhong 1984. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 2), p. 153.

CHAPTER 4. THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

4.1. The Ancient Eight Tribes

The social organization of the Khitan had been developed at tribal level, when the Khitan first occurred as an independent political force in the Chinese historical sources. The *Liao Shi* records a legend of the tribal origin of the Khitan. See *Materials* {1(2)}. The exact time of this legend cannot be dated. What can be seen from this legendary story, however, is that it happened in a period of patriarchy. The eight tribes shared a common genealogical line based on patrilineal relations. They claimed a common descent, and kept brotherhood with one another.

The term "Khitan eight tribes" as a terminology was frequently mentioned in the Chinese historical sources from the *Jiu Tangshu* through to the *Song Huiyao Jigao*. However, after making a comprehensive survey of the Khitan history, it is easily seen, that the number of Khitan tribes obviously was not limited to eight, no matter which period it was in, prior to the founding of their imperial state. The activities of some other Khitan tribes also occurred in the historical records. For this reason, the question of whether the Khitan had exact eight tribes or more has led to a particularly sharp debate among historians. Currently most of them believe that the Khitan had more than eight tribes. Concerning the reason why they preferred to use the number "eight", the Chinese specialist Chen Shu has given a more plausible interpretation. After observing the Manchurian traditions, he found that those Manchurian peoples accustomed to using the term of "eight tribes", for instance, the Shiwei eight tribes, Dilie eight tribes and Poli eight tribes that were recorded in the *Liao Shi*. As well the Xianbei had eight states and Manchu Qing had eight banners. Chen Shu argued that most of the above mentioned "eight" was not an exact figure except for the Manchu Qing's eight banners. Furthermore, he explained that the "eight" was used by the northeast peoples as a symbolic number that means "overall" just as the concepts of "Eight Diagrams (used in divination)" and "Eight Directions" are used in Chinese culture.¹ In addition to those evidences that has been lists by Chen Shu, the *Hou Hanshu* provides a piece of information about using the term "eight tribes" by the Xiongnu, it reads:

建武二十四年春,八部大人共議立比為呼韓邪單于。²

In the spring of the twenty-fourth year of Jianwu (A.D. 48), the chieftains of the eight tribes discussed together, and then decided to enthrone Bi to be the Huhanye Shanyu.

¹ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 40.

² HHS 89. 2942.

From the above record, it can be seen that the term "eight tribes" was used by the Xiongnu people as early as middle of the 1st Century. And after several centuries, this term was used by the Manchurian peoples. Therefore, there is a strong possibility that using the term "eight tribes" originally was a steppe tradition rather than a Manchurian one. Nevertheless, this tradition was probably adopted later by the Manchurian peoples through constant interaction between the Inner Asian peoples over centuries.

The names of the Khitan ancient eight tribes were first recorded in the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Wei Shu* as: 1. the Xiwandan, 2. the Hedahe, 3. the Fufuyu, 4. the Yuling, 5. the Rilian, 6. the Pijie, 7. the Li, 8. the Tuliuyu.³ The *Liao Shi* follows this record, calling them "the ancient eight tribes".⁴ After referring to some other historical sources, modern scholars Cai Meibiao and Shu Fen suggest that the names of the Khitan ancient eight tribes should be: 1. the Xiwandan, 2. the Hedahe (Adahe), 3. the Fufuyu (the Jufufu), 4. the Yuling (the Yuyuling), 5. the Rilian, 6. the Pili'er, 7. the Tuliuyu, 8. the Yuzhenhou.⁵ Some historians suspect that the Khitan ancient eight tribes did not include their maternal clans. The tribes, which the maternal clans belonged to, might have been out of these eight tribes.⁶

The beginning time of the ancient eight tribes cannot be known, due to the lack of historical evidence. The Khitan as an independent group of people occurred in the Chinese sources at the beginning of the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-530). This period ended during the Sui/Tang transition at the beginning of the 7th Century. In recorded history, it lasted about two hundred years. At this stage, the social organization of the Khitan tribes was still at tribal level. As recorded in the *Wei Shu*, see *Materials* {11}. From this record, it can be obviously seen that the Khitan tribes connected with the outside world separately. The tribal chieftains not only had right to deal with their own tribal affairs, but also had right to contact the outside world, for example sending envoys to present tributes. It seems that they had not yet formed a united organization with common leadership and unified operations. In the *Description of the Wuji* of the *Wei Shu*, some Khitan tribes were called "states"; it is probably because the compilers of the *Wei Shu* regarded these Khitan tribes as different independent states. It also proves that each of the Khitan tribes had its own independent external activities. As stated by Jennifer Holmgren, "relations (of the Khitan) with foreign powers ... were carried out at individual tribal level".⁷

³ *WS* 100. 2223.

⁴ *LS* 32. 377.

⁵ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 966; Shu, Fen 1984, p. 18.

⁶ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 967.

⁷ Holmgren 1986, p. 42.

Under such circumstances, their economic development was restricted by harsh natural conditions and low social organization. As well such separated tribes were often in the state of war. Their life was maintained under precarious condition. As the *Sui Shu* records, "The various (Khitan) tribes attacked one another frequently, and such a situation had lasted for a long time."⁸ In addition, they also had some outside enemies. During the 4th to 6th Centuries, the international situation in the northeastern Asia was quite complicated. Three major forces, the Rouran (replaced by the Türks in middle of the 6th Century) in the west, the Tuoba Wei (replaced by the Northern Qi in 550 and then the Sui in 581) in the south and the Koguryō in the east, were competing with one another for control of the northeastern Asia. The region of Liaoxi, which was inhabited by the Khitan and Kumo Xi, became a buffer zone among these three major powers. The Khitan inevitably fell victim to this competition. They alternately suffered oppression from each of these major powers, in addition to fighting with their close neighbors, the Kumo Xi. The Khitan had been invaded by the Koguryō on many occasions during this period. In 553, the Khitan were severely attacked by the Northern Qi Dynasty, lost over 100,000 people and several hundred thousand livestock. Later, they were forced by the Türks to temporarily reside with 10,000 families in the Koryō (Gaoli).⁹ In 605, having been severely attacked by a joint force of the Sui and Türks, about 40,000 Khitan men and women were captured and among them all the men were killed. After these continuous attacks, the Khitan tribes, therefore, were frustrated and had disbanded by the end of the 6th Century. As it is recorded in the *Liao Shi*, "The tribes became dispersed and were no longer the eight tribes of old".¹⁰

During this period, the title of those Khitan chieftains was *mofuhe* or *mohefu*. The names of Khitan chieftains that can be found in the historical sources were only two, Hechen and Wuyu.

4.2. The Dahe Tribal Confederation

Preparation for building up a tribal confederation. The concept of large social organization and a supreme office were probably introduced to the Khitan society under Turkish influence, as suggested by Holmgren¹¹. However, this is only a hypothesis with little supporting data. The real motive forces ought to be the external pressure and influence, and the outcome of the internal social development. In order to cease internal conflicts, to withstand natural calamities, to resist

⁸ *SS* 84, p. 1881.

⁹ *BS* 94. 3128.

¹⁰ *LS* 32. 376.

¹¹ Holmgren 1986, p. 45.

foreign invasions and to broaden their own territory, the Khitan tribes felt it necessary to be united and organized into a larger social unit – tribal confederation. In addition to the aspirations of themselves, the external situation also showed favorable for the Khitan to merge together during the Sui/Tang transition at the beginning of 7th Century.

1. Temporary military alliance. At the early stage of their tribal history, the Khitan might have had experience to make a joint force by uniting two or more tribes to fight against a common enemy.¹² From the middle of the 5th Century onwards, the Khitan tribes had continuously suffered severe attacks from powerful neighbors, the Tuoba Wei followed by the Northern Qi and the Sui, the Rouran followed by the Türks, and even the Koguryö (Gaogouli) and had sustained heavy losses. The Khitan people might have recognized that separate tribes could not resist powerful foreign attacks without combining together, so they had made some attempts to unite when war occurred. In addition to resistance to foreign invasions, the Khitan occasionally raided the Chinese borders for obtaining some properties to compensate their losses caused by foreign invasions, and to meet the special needs of their tribal elites. Such kinds of raids also needed temporary military alliance. The Khitan tribes, therefore, had undergone a process of forming a temporary military alliance or temporary tribal confederation, at times, prior to building up an everlasting tribal confederation. As recorded in the *Sui Shu* in *Materials* {23}, "In the case of a military operation, the chieftains discussed it together. In mobilizing troops, tallies needed to be matched". This record reveals that the tribal organization and leadership of the Khitan had changed somehow in the period of the Sui Dynasty, compared to its previous stage, particularly in military operations. It means that agreement made by tribal chieftains was necessary before launching a military operation. In addition, mobilizing troops by individual tribal leader was not allowed.¹³ There was similar situation at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, as recorded in the *Xin Tangshu* in *Materials* {26(2)}. Such kinds of military operations began to emerge probably as early as the end of the Northern Qi Dynasty. In 553, a large-scale Khitan invasion upon the Chinese borders was undoubtedly a united military operation of the Khitan tribes. The Khitan's raiding of Yingzhou in 605 was another example. The Khitan were finally defeated by 20,000 Turkish cavalymen dispatched by the Sui. As a result of this raiding, 40,000 Khitan men and women were captured. It can be seen that it was impossible to initiate such a large-scale raid without a military alliance of the Khitan tribes. Nevertheless, at this time, such kind of co-operation or military alliance was unusual and loose in organization. The alliance ended once

¹² *Idem.*

¹³ *Idem.* p. 44.

the war stopped. In addition, there was probably a common leader in case of war. Apart from military affairs, the common leader sometimes took charge of diplomatic affairs, for example, paying homage or presenting tributes to China. As recorded in the *Sui Shu*, an unnamed common leader of the Khitan tribes led all chieftains under him to pay homage to the Sui court in 584, refer to *Materials* {17}. The common leader's power, however, was temporary and limited to only organizing military operations and occasional external affairs.

The names of the ten Khitan tribes that existed in the Sui period were lost except for the subdued Chufu tribe, which broke away from the Koryŏ, according to *Materials* {20,23}. What is known is that the other subdued tribe that deserted the Türks was included in these ten tribes, in addition to the Chufu tribe. See *Materials* {21}. According to *Materials* {28(4)}, Xuanzhou was set in 646 for settling a Khitan tribe led by Li Qülü. This tribe might be identical to the Chufu tribe.¹⁴ The rest were probably those tribes, which submitted to the Sui in the fourth year of Kaihuang (584) led by those *mohefus* under a supreme chieftain whose name was not known. However, it is more likely these Khitan tribes were the other eight tribes, the majority of the Khitan in the Sui period.

2. Change of external circumstances. The founding of the Sui Dynasty in 581 marked the end of over three hundred years of disunited history, and the beginning of reunification of China. This newly founded semi-unified Chinese dynasty was so strong politically and militarily that it drew the submissions of almost all the Khitan tribes that had been dispersed by the threats from their stronger neighbors the Koguryŏ, Chinese, and the Türks successively since 479, refer to the record of the *Sui Shu* in *Materials* {17,20,21}. These submissions provided an opportunity for those scattered Khitan tribes to return back to their old land in succession under the protection of the Sui, and made the establishment of a tribal confederation possible.

On the other hand, on the steppe the Turkish Empire, the former overlords of the Khitan, split into hostile eastern and western khanates around 583. At the same time the eastern Türks were also engaged in a violent civil war, due to their fragmentary system of leadership. Both the split and the civil war followed by successive disasters of famine and epidemic disease seriously weakened the eastern Türks. Such an unfavorable situation for the Türks freed the Khitan and some other vassal ethnic tribes from their control. To the Türks there were no more options but submission to China to seek protection and aid against rival tribal leaders and natural calamities. Simultaneously, for strong political and ideological reasons China welcomed the submission of a Turkish khaghan.¹⁵ At the

¹⁴ Sun, Jinji 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 997.

¹⁵ Barfield 1989, p. 137.

same time, the Sui had ambitions to conquer the State of Chen in the south and complete the unification of China. To put it into effect, a peaceful northern frontier was definitely needed. The Sui policy towards the Türks was to make an alliance with the Eastern Türks who were close to the Sui frontier, in order not only to maintain a good relation with the Eastern Türks, but also prevent the unity of the two rival sections of the Türks. When the Khitan tribes submitted to the Sui, the Sui still put them under the Turkish control for maintaining smooth relationships with the Eastern Türks, as recorded in the *Sui Shu* in *Materials* {21}. Therefore, in most of the Sui period, the Khitan were Chinese vassals only in name, but Turkish subjects in reality. The friendly relationship between the Sui and the Türks also provided a peaceful external environment for the Khitan to concentrate on their own internal development.

Beginning time of tribal confederacy. Concerning the beginning of the first tribal confederation of the Khitan, a consensus has been made among historians. The term "Dahe", as a name of the leading family of the first Khitan tribal confederation, was first recorded in the *Jiu Tangshu*. It reads,

其君長姓大賀氏。¹⁶

Their (the Khitan) supreme ruler was surnamed Dahe.

The *Liao Shi* also claims,

隋唐之際，契丹之君號大賀氏。¹⁷

During the Sui/Tang transition, the Khitan supreme ruler was called the Dahe.

Building on the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*'s insights, most historians and specialists undoubtedly, believe that the first tribal confederation of the Khitan was the Dahe tribal confederation, and it was formed when the Tang Dynasty replaced the Sui (around 618), or at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty (618-907).¹⁸

However, the above historical records, tell us only that there was an existing tribal confederation of the Khitan led by the Dahe family during the Sui/Tang transition or in the beginning years of the Tang, but do not confirm that it was the beginning of the Dahe confederation, or the beginning of the period of tribal confederation of the Khitan. The Chinese specialist Chen Shu infers that there probably were numbers of supreme chieftains before Duoluo, who was the first historically recorded supreme chieftain of the Dahe tribal confederation and who

¹⁶ *JTS* 199. 5349.

¹⁷ *LS* 63. 950.

¹⁸ *Cf.* Hua, Shan & Fei, Guoqing 1958; Cai, Meibiao 1964; Shu, Fen 1984; Wang, Zhonghan 1994.

sent envoys to present tributes to the Tang court in the sixth year of Wude (623).¹⁹ The Sui/Tang transition at the start of the 7th Century, therefore, could be merely regarded as the earliest time of the tribal confederation of the Khitan as we currently know from the available historical sources.

The name and origin of the Dahe. Concerning the name Dahe, many scholars speculate that it was originally not a name of a family or clan. Some of them suppose that it was probably transformed from an official title into a family name.²⁰ According to Hua Shan & Fei Guoqing, the term Dahe was possibly a different transcription of great (da) Mofuhe (a title of tribal chieftain of the Khitan from the end of the 4th Century to the end of the 6th Century) or great (da) Ruhezhu (Hezhu) (a title of tribal chieftain of the Khitan in the Tang period). Da means big or great in Chinese. He 賀 is similar to He 紇 in pronunciation. Great Mufuhe or Ruhezhu means that a supreme leader who was over those tribal chieftains. Holmgren makes similar speculation, "it is likely that Ta-ho (Dahe) was originally not the name of the first ruling family at confederation level was closely associated with submission to an external power".²¹ Some others infer that Dahe might have been transformed from a tribal name into family (clan) name.²² Shu Fen states, "Dahe was another Chinese transcription of Hedahe (a tribal name in the Ancient Eight Tribes)".²³ The latter view also tentatively provides the origin of the Dahe. According to Chen Shu, "The Dahe family might have originated from the Hedahe tribe recorded in the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Wei Shu* or the Badahe tribe recorded in the *Description of the Wuji* of the *Wei Shu*, i.e. the first tribe of the Ancient Eight Tribes recorded on the *Liao Shi*"²⁴. This theory has been taken a step further by Cai Meibiao. He claims that the Dahe should be a clan within the Hedahe tribe, which the Hebian tribe was derived from. In addition, it was the Dahe clan but not the Hebian tribe, which had the hereditary prerogatives to be elected to the supreme leader of the confederation.²⁵

The Dahe tribal confederation. The Dahe tribal confederation is first mentioned in the *Jiu Tangshu*²⁶. The general situation of this tribal confederation at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty is summarized in the *Xin Tangshu* in *Materials*

¹⁹ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 51.

²⁰ Hua, Shan & Fei, Guoqing 1958; Holmgren 1986, p. 46.

²¹ Holmgren 1986, p. 46.

²² Chen, Shu 1948, p. 50; Chai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji 1988 (vol. 1), p. 969; Shu, Fen 1984, p. 26.

²³ Shu, Fen 1984, p. 26.

²⁴ Chen, Shu 1948, 49.

²⁵ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji 1988 (vol. 1), p. 969.

²⁶ *JTS* 199. 5349.

{26(2)}. It can be seen from this piece of record that the organization and leadership of the Dahe confederation at its early stage was almost the same as the temporary confederation in the period of Sui, which is recorded in the *Sui Shu*, see the preceding discussion. As described by Holmgren, "all military problems, both internal and external, were now matters for collective decision making. Other issues, such as those related the economic well-being of tribe could be decided by tribal leadership alone".²⁷

The critical difference from the temporary confederation was that the tribes of the Dahe confederation were under a relatively fixed common leader who was drawn from the Dahe family. For this reason, some scholars call the Dahe tribal confederation "the everlasting confederation".²⁸

The supreme chieftain of the Dahe tribal confederation, first recorded in the Chinese historical sources, was Duoluo. According to the *Jiu Tangshu* in *Materials* {32}, in the sixth year of Wude (623) Duoluo presented tributes to the Tang court.

Once this tribal confederation was established, the Khitan tribes were under the supreme leadership of the confederation. Nevertheless, the supreme leader's power was limited to only diplomatic activities with the neighboring peoples, "because the component tribes were largely autonomous".²⁹ In addition, the military affairs had to be decided by the agreement of tribal chieftains.

In the historical sources from the Tang Dynasty onward, any records concerning the separate activities of the eight tribes cannot be found. Almost every contact with the outside world was made by the supreme chieftains of this tribal confederation or their envoys except for those tribes outside of the confederation. Additionally, no any conflicts among the Khitan tribes had occurred since the Dahe tribal confederation was established.

The composition of the Dahe confederation is recorded in the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi* as following: 1. the Daji tribe; 2. the Hebian tribe; 3. the Duhuo tribe; 4. the Fenwen tribe; 5. the Tubian tribe 6. the Ruixi tribe; 7. the Zhuijin tribe; 8. the Fu tribe.³⁰ The Hebian was believed to be derived from the Hedahe tribe in the Ancient Eight Tribes, and was the leading tribe of the confederation, from which the supreme chiefs came.³¹ To be precise, the supreme chieftains of the confederation were drawn from the Dahe clan, which belonged to the Hebian tribe. Nevertheless, the *Xin Wudai Shi* has another *scenario*. It records the Dahe Eight Tribes as: 1. the Danjieli tribe; 2. the Yishihuo

²⁷ Holmgren 1986, p. 44.

²⁸ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji 1988 (vol. 1), p. 969; and Shu, Fen 1984, p. 1.

²⁹ Barfield 1989, p. 169.

³⁰ *LS* 32. 379.

³¹ Sun, Jinji 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 997.

Tribe; 3. the Shihuo tribe; 4. the Nawei tribe; 5. the Pinmo tribe; 6. the Nahuiji Tribe; 7. the Jijie tribe; 8. the Xiwa tribe.³² The *Wudan Huiyao* and *Zizhi Tongjian Kaoyi* have the same record.³³ The Japanese scholar Matsui postulates that it is likely that these two groups of tribal names were the same, but in different Chinese transcriptions. In addition, the latter ones recorded in the *Xin Wudai Shi*, *Wudai Huiyao* and *Zizhi Tongjian Kaoyi* probably appeared at the end of the Tang Dynasty.³⁴ However, the Dahe tribal confederation still did not include their maternal clan. The tribe to which the maternal clan belonged might have been outside of these eight tribes. According to the record in *Materials* {40(1)}, the tribe to which Sun Wanrong affiliated had a marriage relationship with the Dahe lineage. This tribe was outside of the Dahe tribal confederation. More details about this tribe will be discussed later in this chapter.

After consolidating his regime, emperor Taizong of the Tang started to undertake a great foreign expansion. Due to his profound knowledge of steppe culture and tradition, he had conquered the most formidable enemy, the Eastern Turkic Empire (553-629), and then almost all of the nomadic tribes, which previously had been under the control of the Turkish Empire, turned their allegiance to the Tang. For the Khitan, the pressure from steppe had been relaxed. As one of the previous subdued people of the Türks, the Khitan declared themselves Chinese vassals. In 628, the Dahe tribal confederation led by Mohui surrendered to the Tang. Twenty years later in 648, this tribal confederation led by Kuge submitted to the Tang again with its nuclear eight tribes. The Khitan, for the first time, were then regularly under the Tang's "loose rein (*jimi*)". The Government-general of Songmo was set for administration near the Chinese garrison Yingzhou, and Kuge was appointed the Governor-general of Songmo. Ten subordinate prefectures were set in accordance with the Khitan original eight tribes in their own land. Concretely, Qiaoluo prefecture was set for settling the Daji tribe; Tanhan prefecture was set for settling the Hebian tribe; Wufeng prefecture was set for settling the Duhuo tribe; Yuling prefecture was set for settling the Fenwen tribe; Rilian prefecture was set for settling the Tubian tribe; Tuhe prefecture was set for settling the Ruixi tribe; Wandan prefecture was set for settling the Zhuijin tribe; Pili and prefectures were set for settling the Fu tribe. At the same time, the chieftains of these eight tribes who were appointed prefects were brought under the Governor-general of Songmo's command, in dealing with their internal tribal affairs.³⁵ This "loose-rein" arrangement showed that the

³² *XWDS* 72. 886.

³³ *WDHY* 29, quoted in Feng, Jiqin *et al.* 1990, p. 57; *Zizhi Tongjian Kaoyi* in the *ZZTJ* 266. 8677.

³⁴ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 98.

³⁵ *XTS* 219. 6168.

Khitan eight tribes were subordinate to the tribal confederation led by the Dahe family.

Separate tribes outside of the Dahe tribal confederation. With the exception of the foregoing mentioned eight tribes, which belonged to the Dahe tribal confederation, there were some other Khitan clans and tribes outside of the tribal confederation with independent activities of their own. Some scholars assume that "these tribes outside of the Dahe confederation probably evolved from those stronger clans, which split off from their own tribes and advanced against the south".³⁶

The *Liao Shi* records, in the time of the Tang Dynasty, there were Songmo and Xuanzhou, which were outside of the Dahe tribal confederation, see *Materials* {27}. The specific situations of these two tribes need to be examined. According to the *Jiu Tangshu*, both of Changzhou that was set in the second year of Zhenguan (628) and Wozhou that was set in the years of Zaichu (689-690) were for settling the Songmo tribe of the Khitan. These two tribes were subordinate to Yingzhou. See *Materials* {28(1), (2)}. Concerning Xuanzhou, the *Account of geography* of the *Xin Tangshu* provides some information in detail. According to *Materials* {28(4)}, Xuanzhou had been set at the beginning of the Sui Dynasty for settling a Khitan tribe led by Li Qulü. Therefore the tribe led by Quju was identical to the tribe led by Li Qulü, and was also the descendant of the Chufu tribe.³⁷ It was really a large tribe because it already had more than ten thousand households who had temporarily resided in the Koryŏ as early as the period of the Northern Qi (550-577), even though the size of the population was somewhat exaggerated by the Chinese historians.

Through examining the historical sources, it is observed that there were not only the foregoing mentioned ten Khitan tribes. In both *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* some other Khitan tribes, which were outside of the Dahe tribal confederation, were recorded in different accounts, see *Materials* 28 for more details.

The most important tribe, which needs to be discussed, is the one led by Sun Wanrong. Sun Wanrong's great-grandfather was Sun Aocao who submitted to the Tang in the fourth year of Wude (621), and was appointed the governor of Liaozhou by the Tang court. See *Materials* {31(2)}. But in the *Account of Geography* of both the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu*, it is recorded that Liaozhou was set for settling the Neiji tribe in the second year of Wude (619), refer to *Materials* {28(5)}. From the above material, it can be seen that the date of Sun Aocao's submission to the Tang should be in 619, and the Neiji tribe led by Sun

³⁶ See Zhao, Weibang 1958.

³⁷ Sun, Jinji 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 997.

Aocao, settled in Liaozhou which was changed into Weizhou in the first year of Zhenguan (627). In the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Xin Tangshu*, Sun Aocao is described as "the chieftain of a collateral tribe of the Khitan". This short description hints that the tribe led by the Sun family was outside of the nuclear eight tribes of the Dahe confederation. Later, Weizhou was again changed into Guicheng Zhou, and Sun Aocao's great-grandson Sun Wanrong was appointed the prefect of Guicheng Zhou in the period of Empress Wu's reign. The records in *Materials* {31,40(1)} reveal that the Sun family, which belonged to the Neiji tribe, had marriage relations with the Dahe family. The history of the Neiji tribe can be traced back to the period of Northern Qi. This tribe was probably the one, which submitted to the Türks in the period of Northern Qi. Afterward, it deserted the Türks and surrendered to the Sui with more than 4,000 households by the end of the Kaihuang (581-589) period, see *Materials* {21}. In the above record, the *Sui Shu* clearly call this tribe "*biebu* (a collateral tribe)" of the Khitan. This also proves that the tribe led by the Sun family was outside of the Dahe confederation.

Moreover there were still two other Khitan tribes, which can be found within the period of the Dahe. One was called the Yishige tribe; the other was called the Yishihuo tribe. With regards to the Yishige tribe, see the *Jiu Tangshu* in *Materials* {28(6), (7)}. Daizhou was set three years earlier than the Government-general of Songmo in 645. When the Khitan rebellion led by Li Jinzhong erupted in 696, this tribe was moved to Qingzhou. The historical records in *Materials* {28(6), (7)} show clearly that this tribe did not participate in the Li-Sun rebellion. These two pieces of evidences prove that the Yishige tribe was indeed outside of the Dahe tribal confederation with independent relations with the Tang Dynasty. Additionally Xinzhou was set nearly fifty years later than the Government-general of Songmo. It was set for settling the Yishihuo tribe. Almost like the Yishige tribe, during the Li-Sun rebellion, the Yishihuo tribe was moved away from the battle field, the area under Yingzhou's jurisdiction, and was moved back soon after the war was over. This indicates that the Yishihuo tribe was also an independent tribe that was outside of the Dahe confederation. Since this tribe was not involved in the Li-Sun rebellion, it grew in strength later. Some scholars believe that the later Yila tribe led by Abaoji grew out of this Yishihuo tribe.³⁸

4.3. The Yaonian Tribal Confederation

Debates on the existence of Yaonian tribal confederation. The question whether Yaonian tribal confederation had existed or not is a disputed issue in the field of the Khitan studies. The Japanese scholar Matsui Hitoshi maintained in his

³⁸ See Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 975-976; and Shu, Fen 1984, p. 69.

work "History of the Rise of the Khitan" that the so-called Yaonian family/clan was merely a fabricated legend. He argued that Yaonian, as a name of a famous family in the Khitan's ancient legend, was adopted by the author of the *Liao Shi* as the predecessor of Abaoji, in order to declare the legitimate position of Abaoji's authority. The grounds for his hypothesis are built upon that almost all the historical sources relating to the Khitan history have not mentioned the so-called Yaonian, with the exception of the *Liao Shi* and *Xin Wudan Shi*.³⁹ Another Japanese scholar Otagi Matuo strongly criticized Matsui's theory, supporting the *Liao Shi* which does contain some information on the Yaonian family and the Yaonian tribal confederation.⁴⁰ This assertion is also held by most of the specialists both the Chinese and Western.⁴¹

In essence my contention is that the sources that the *Liao Shi* has preserved about the Yaonian is quite reliable. Although the *Liao Shi* is renowned for its inferiority with technical errors, lack of precision, even overlaps and self-contradictions, "its data on tribal life and traditions are unique".⁴² The compilation of the *Liao Shi* was mainly based upon the Yelü Yan edited *Shilu* that was completed in the Liao Dynasty and the Chen Daren edited *Liao Shi* that was completed in the Jurchen Jin Dynasty. Both the *Shilu* and *Liao Shi* are believed to be official documents and the time of compilation was relatively close to the actual history, so that there would be no reason to entirely suspect its reliability. The inferiority of the *Liao Shi* is caused by the hastiness and coarseness of its compilation. However, the historical materials the *Liao Shi* has collected may be more or less reliable, even though they are commonly believed deficient. The theory, which completely denies the existence of the Yaonian family and Yaonian tribal confederation, seems to be questionable.

Re-establishment of tribal confederation. The history of the "Inner Asiatic tribes several hundred years before Chingis Khan" was simply summarized by Wittfogel & Feng as "a picture of the formation, dissolution, and reorganization".⁴³ Reviewing the Khitan history, it can be obviously noticed that the development of the Khitan tribes appeared to exactly follow this model. By the end of the Northern Qi period, the ancient eight tribes of the Khitan became dispersed under the severe attacks or invasions conducted by the Northern Qi, the Türks and even Korea.

³⁹ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 123-124.

⁴⁰ Otagi 1988, pp. 172-177.

⁴¹ See Chen, Shu 1948, Wittfogel & Feng 1949, Cai, Meibiao 1964 and Shu, Fen 1984.

⁴² Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 31.

⁴³ *Idem.* p. 47.

At the beginning of the Sui Dynasty, however, the Khitan tribes gathered and reorganized into ten newly formed tribes. The most important point worthy of notice is that at this time the organization of the Khitan tribe had developed into a higher level, the tribal confederation or tribal complex led by the Dahe family. The names of the Khitan tribes had been changed, but the new names seem to have some sorts of links with the old ones.⁴⁴ It indicates that such a reorganization was not only a new formation of previously scattered tribes, small fragments of a tribe, clan, lineage, family or even individuals, with a resulting increase in tribal number; but also a profound change in the development of the social organization.

During 696 to 697, the Li-Sun rebellion led to a series of conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang. Finally, this rebellion was crushed by the Tang court allied with the Türks and Xi. However, the aftermath of this rebellion had lasted for about fifteen year from 700 to 714. Going through almost couple of decades of war, the Khitan tribal organization was destroyed. As recorded in the *Liao Shi*,

時契丹因萬榮之敗, 部落凋散.⁴⁵

Because of the failure of (Sun) Wanrong's rebellion, the Khitan tribes became dispersed."

The Dahe tribal confederation was on the decline. Furthermore, Ketuyu's coups (720-734) ended the hereditary privilege of the Dahe family in succeeding the supreme office of the tribal confederation. The Dahe tribal confederation was finally overthrown in 730.

During this period, what is worth noticing is the appearance of the military chief of the confederation. Ketuyu was the first recorded military chief (*Yaguan* in the Chinese sources) of the Khitan confederation. The re-establishment of tribal confederation was a revolutionary social change in the pre-dynastic Khitan history. However, the transformation from an old tribal confederation into a more sophisticated new one had undergone through a sharp internal violent struggle in the ruling class of the Khitan.⁴⁶ During the period of this revolutionary transformation, the Yishihuo tribe, from which the later imperial tribe Yila split off, was gradually getting stronger. Guozhe (Yuzhe, Yujie), who was chieftain of the Yishihuo (Shuhuo) tribe, was also the military chief of the confederation. From an imperial edict in the period of emperor Xuanzong (713-755), he had the same importance as the Khitan king Julü (Qulie) and the military chief Ketuyu.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Cf. Shu, Fen 1984, pp. 22-26.

⁴⁵ *LS* 32. 380.

⁴⁶ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 972-973.

⁴⁷ *QTW* 285, quoted in Sun, Jinji 1990, p. 438.

As the *Jiu Tangshu* recorded, he shared the military power with Ketuyu in 734.⁴⁸ The political significance and strength of the Yishihuo tribe is obviously seen from the above description. It was Guozhe who finally killed Ketuyu and Qulie, marking the end of the fifteen-year lasted coups among the Khitan.⁴⁹ Guozhe's assassin Nieli was also from the Yishihuo, because the *Zizhi Tongjian* calls him a subject official of Guozhe⁵⁰. Nieli finally won the struggle and completed the task of the re-establishment of tribal confederation.

After suffering from decades of the turmoil of war, the first Khitan tribal confederation was overthrown and the tribes became dispersed. Some of the tribesmen died in the war, some were captured by the Tang, and some of the tribes or clans submitted to the Tang, and might have been gradually became assimilated into Chinese society.⁵¹ In addition, some other tribes or clans were probably absorbed into the Turkish society, because the Khitan had been under Turkish control for so many years. The re-organization of the Khitan tribal confederation was based upon the remnants of the Khitan tribes, clans or even individuals, and they were re-organized and divided into eight tribes once more, according to the Khitan tradition of “eight tribes”. Actually, the newly organized Khitan tribal confederation was centered by the Yila and Yishi tribes. The Yila and Yishi tribes were derived from the Yishihuo tribe, which had been outside of the Dahe confederation and became stronger when the Dahe confederation was falling into decline. The new tribal confederation was developed from gathering the dispersed tribes and clans.⁵² The specific measure was the so-called “to set tribes by dividing camps” stated by the *Liao Shi*.⁵³ The “camp” was probably equal to “clan”.⁵⁴ One tribe would consist of at least two clans (or camps). The so-called “to set tribes by dividing camps” means that some component clans (which belonged to an old tribe, might have been divided into two or more parts; and each part, which consisted one or more clans) would form a new tribe. The eight tribes of the new confederation, therefore, included not only the remnant clans that belonged to the eight tribes of the Dahe confederation, but also the clans that belonged to those tribes outside of the Dahe confederation. Nieli named Zuwu Khaghan, who was affiliated to the Yaonian clan, the supreme chieftain of the tribal confederation; and Nieli himself became the military chief. Since the supreme leaders of the confederation were drawn from the Yaonian clan, the new

⁴⁸ *JTS* 199. 5353.

⁴⁹ *Idem*.

⁵⁰ *ZZTJ* 214. 6812.

⁵¹ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 974.

⁵² *Idem*, p. 976.

⁵³ *LS* 33. 385-386.

⁵⁴ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 975.

confederation was called the Yaonian tribal confederation. The tribal chieftains or military chiefs of the Yila (which was derived from Yishihuo) tribe were from the Yelü, the later imperial clan in the dynastic period of the Khitan. The descendants of Guozhe were the military chiefs of the Yaonian confederation for generations. From the examples of Guozhe and Nieli, it can be also seen that the post of military chief of the confederation was concurrently held by the chieftain or military chief of the Yishihuo. The military chief of the confederation had played a more and more important role in the period of the Yaonian, since the time of Ketuyu. The military chief's virtual power actually exceeded that of the supreme leader of the confederation in the whole period of the Yaonian until the establishment of the Khitan state. Abaoji, a descendant of Nieli, finally took power of the Yaonian, founding a dynastic state.

During the period of the Yaonian confederation, the supreme chieftain was called khaghan. Qulie is believed by the *Liao Shi* to be the first khaghan, the Wa khaghan of the Yaonian confederation.⁵⁵ Opposing this, some modern scholars suggest that the first khaghan might have been Zuwu khaghan.⁵⁶ Due to the lack of historical sources, the name of the first khaghan of the Yaonian confederation still remains an open question.

Composition of the Yaonian Tribal Confederation. In most of the Yaonian period, the Khitan had submitted to the Uighurs (745-840), so that they had less connection with the Tang Dynasty than before. In addition, after the An-Shi (An Lushan and Shi Siming) rebellion (755-763), the central government of the Tang lost control over the "loose rein" regions, which were located in the northeastern frontier of China to oversee the Khitan and the other Manchurian barbarians. The connection between the Tang court and the Khitan diminished. Therefore, the Chinese historical records on the Yaonian tribal confederation are fairly limited. The only document, which contains some information on the Yaonian tribal confederation, is the *Liao Shi*. Nevertheless, the records on the Yaonian in the *Liao Shi* seem to be somewhat self-contradictory and obscure. Regarding the components of the Yaonian tribal confederation, I presume that there might be some omissions in certain paragraphs of the records, and some misunderstandings made by the compilers of the *Liao Shi*, due to those omissions and the coarseness in compiling the *Liao Shi*.

In *Liao Shi* vol. 32, there are two accounts that contain some records on the Yaonian confederation. See *Materials* {44}. I will try to make some tentative criticism on the above material in order to better understand them. Firstly, the time frame of these two pieces of information should be the same. The above

⁵⁵ Cf. *LS* 63. 955-956.

⁵⁶ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 976.

accounts of record seem to be arranged successively in time. In other words, the "Yaonian eight tribes" seems to be earlier than the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" in time sequence, and the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" seems to have evolved from the "Yaonian eight tribes". However, by carefully examining the texts, it can be found that the formation of the "Yaonian eight tribes" and the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu Khaghan" occurred at the same time, because "Nieli, the earliest ancestor of the Liao, enthroned Dinian Zuli to be Zuwu khaghan" in *Materials* {44(1)} and "Nieli assisted Zuwu khaghan" in *Materials* {44(2)} are certainly at the same time. Secondly, there seems to be some omissions in the second account in *Materials* {44(2)}. After describing the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis", it is written that, "*the divided parts are not known*". Followed by this, in addition, ten tribes are listed afterward. It appears that these twelve tribes were divided from the "three Yelüs" and the "two Shenmis", corresponding to the so-called "Yelü seven tribes" and the "Shenmi five tribes". Yet by carefully studying the text and referring to the previous studies, I assume that the listed tribes of "Yila", "Yishi", etc. are not the tribes, which divided from the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis". According to Sun Jinji, the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis" were organized into the later "inner four tribes" in the period of the Liao (907-1125), but could not be divided into the twelve new tribes in the period of the Yaonian. He argues that all the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis" were included in the "inner four tribes" except for the Dahe lineage. They were not tribes themselves but only some powerful clans or lineages, which are described by the *Liao Shi* as "those that became lineages or clans without a tribe".⁵⁷ In addition, "bu" has many different meanings in Chinese. Therefore, in my opinion, the "bu" of "Yelü qi bu", "Shenmi wu bu", and "fenbu" in *Materials* {44(2)} does not necessarily mean "tribe", it possibly means "part", "section" or "unit". Then the sentence "*The three Yelüs were divided into seven and the two Shenmis were divided into five*" seems to mean that the original three Yelü lineages were divided into seven and the original two Shenmi lineages were divided into five. In my contention, Sun Jinji's statement is quite reasonable. Therefore, I maintain that there might be some omissions between the description of the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis", and the list of tribal names, precisely after "*The divided parts are not known*" and before "*What we know are ...*". "*The divided parts are not known*" probably refers to the division of lineages/clans of the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis", but not the following listed tribes. Otherwise, it is extremely hard to explain why the author first claims, "*The divided parts are not known at all*", and then provides a list of them. The divided lineages/clans of the "three Yelüs" and "two Shenmis"

⁵⁷ Sun, Jinji 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988, pp. 998-999.

probably were omitted from the text, or perhaps, there was no such division at all. At least, it can be found in the *Liao Shi* that the "two Shenmis", the Bali and the Yishi, were still the same in dynastic period of the Khitan.⁵⁸ Moreover there might be some description or statement before "*What we know are ...*". The listed tribes, except for the You Dabu (Right Big Tribe) and the Zuo Dabu (Left Big Tribe), in my assumption, could be regarded as the eight tribes of the Yaonian confederation. In Hua Shan & Fei Guoqing's article, they point out the You Dabu and the Zuo Dabu seem not to be equal with the other eight tribes, because the way they appear in the *Liao Shi* entirely differs from those of the others, always with either "Khitan" or "Liao" before the "You Dabu" and the "Zuo Dabu". Furthermore they state that these two tribal names may have other meanings.⁵⁹ Building upon this theory, Xiang Nan & Yang Ruowei have made another proposal. They maintain that the whole Khitan tribes might have been divided into two big parts, and they were called the You Dabu and Zuo Dabu.⁶⁰ Another opinion claimed by Chen Shu, "The Yaonian and the Yila were the You Dabu and Zuo Dabu of the Dahe".⁶¹ If this inference is tenable, it suggests that the so-called You Dabu and the Zuo Dabu had already been included in the Yaonian eight tribes. Then the "You Dabu" and the "Zuo Dabu" seem to overlap in the above second account of the *Liao Shi* (*Materials* {44(2)}). Therefore, I presume that the names of the You Dabu and the Zuo Dabu are put in this account by the compilers of the *Liao Shi*, probably only to make the number up to twelve.

Such defects may lead to various interpretations of the records. As a result, the issue of the composition of the Yaonian tribal confederation is still a matter of scholarly debate. Based on the various understandings of the material, different assertions have been made.

Hua Shan & Fei Guoqing accept the record of the above first account of the *Liao Shi* (in *Materials* {44(1)}). Evading the obscure problems in the above second account of the *Liao Shi* (in *Materials* {44 (2)}), they state that there were ten tribes in the Yaonian tribal confederation. They were the eight tribes: the Danlijie, Yishihuo, Shihuo, Nawei, Pinmo, Nahuiji, Jijie, and Xiwa, together with the Yaonian and Yila which were ruling tribes over the eight tribes.⁶²

Cai Meibiao accepts the first record of the above accounts of the *Liao Shi* (in *Materials* {44(1)}). After analyzing the sources, from which the twenty tribes of Abaoji were organized in the dynastic period of the Khitan, he claims that the

⁵⁸ *LS* 33, pp. 383-384.

⁵⁹ See Hua, Shan & Fei, Guoqing 1958, p. 49, note. 2.

⁶⁰ Xiang, Nan & Yang, Ruowei 1980, p. 144.

⁶¹ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 52.

⁶² Hua, Shan & Fei, Guoqing 1958, pp. 48-49.

eight tribes that were organized during the period of Zuwu khaghan were: the Yila, Yishi, Pin, Chute, Wukui, Niela, Tulü bu, and Tuju.⁶³

Chen Shu accepts both of the above accounts of the *Liao Shi*. He first proposes that the Yaonian had eight tribes, and with the Yaonian and the Yila ruling over them, that there were ten Yaonian tribes all together, but he then describes the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" without any comments.⁶⁴ Added weight is given to this assertion by Shu Fen's belief. By providing some tentative ideas on the connections between the "Yaonian eight tribes" and the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" and without adequate evidence, he emphasizes that the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" developed from the "eight tribes of Yaonian".⁶⁵ These two viewpoints fail to notice that the "eight tribes of Yaonian" and the "twenty tribes the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" were actually in the same period of time, and there was no successive relationship between them at all.

In his article "Formation of the Khitan State", following the record of the *Liao Shi*, Zhao Weibang maintains that the tradition of eight tribes was destroyed in the period of Zuwu khaghan, and there were twenty tribes during this period. Besides the old eight tribes (the Danlijie, Yishihuo, Shihuo, Nawei, Pinmo, Nahuiji, Jijie, and Xiwa), there were twelve new tribes, which came from divisions of the five powerful lineages of the "three Yelüs" and the "two Shenmis". Thus there were twenty tribes altogether.⁶⁶

In his work *Studies on the Ancient History of the Khitan*, the Japanese Scholar Otagi denies the existence of the "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan". Furthermore, he points out that the so-called "twenty tribes of the Yaonian Zuwu khaghan" is nothing but a projection of the later "twenty tribes of Taizu" of the past.⁶⁷ Added weight is given to this opinion by the Chinese specialist Sun Jinji's study. After criticizing the two contradictory records in the *Liao Shi* vol. 32 and the followers of each of these two records, Sun Jinji argues that there were ten tribes in the period of Yaonian, including the Yaonian eight tribes added by the You Dabu and Zuo Dabu. According to him there were no twenty tribes in the period of the Yaonian. Furthermore, he points out that the Yaonian eight tribes evolved from the Dahe eight tribes, and the You Dabu and Zuo Dabu were evolved from the two tribes, which deserted Korea and the Türks to submit to the Sui.⁶⁸ Most of his discussions and statements, in my opinion, are

⁶³ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 974-975.

⁶⁴ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 52.

⁶⁵ Shu, Fen 1984, pp. 71-74.

⁶⁶ Zhao, Weibang 1958. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 945.

⁶⁷ Otagi 1988, pp. 53-54.

⁶⁸ Sun, Jinji 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 998-999.

quite reasonable and acceptable. However, his claim of including the You Dabu and Zuo Dabu into the Yaonian tribal confederation and the origins of these two tribes probably need to be reconsidered.

In essence my argument is that the Yaonian tribal confederation consisted of the following eight tribes: the Yila, Yishi, Pin, Chute, Wukui, Niela, Tulübu, and Tuju, and with the two administrations (Erfu): the three Yelüs and two Shenmis which contained some powerful lineages over the eight tribes. This statement generally tallies with the record in *Account of Military Defense* of the *Liao Shi*. It reads:

大賀氏中衰, 僅存五部. 有耶律雅禮者分五部為八, 立二府以總之.⁶⁹

When the Dahe family was on the decline, there were only five tribes left. There was Yelü Yali who divided five tribes into eight, and set two administrations to control over (these eight tribes).

Since the name "Yali" is used here, it could be known that this account of text is quoted from the Chen Daren edited *Liao Shi*.⁷⁰ It is believed a relatively reliable source.

In the above paragraphs it has been discussed that the Yaonian eight tribe and the "twenty tribes of Zuwu khaghan" were the same in dating. It indicates that it is impossible that there were two different combinations with different tribal names of the Yaonian confederation at the same time. Moreover it seems that there was not a process of a transformation from the so-called Yaonian eight tribes into the "twenty tribes of Zuwu Khaghan". There is a strong possibility that one of these two combinations might be misplaced in the record of the *Liao Shi*. I submit a hypothesis that the so-called "Yaonian eight tribes" and "Dahe eight tribes" are different transliterated terms in naming the Dahe eight tribes. First of all, all the tribal names found in the Chinese historical data are Chinese transcribed terms. It is the traditional way to transcribe foreign names and terms into Chinese text. There are many homonymic characters in Chinese. It is very easy to find two or more Chinese characters, which correspond to a single foreign syllable. Therefore, due to the different sources of the different historical data, it is very likely that different Chinese terms were used to transcribe a single Khitan tribal name. Secondly, some scholars have found some connections between the names of the so-called "Yaonian eight tribes" and "Dahe eight tribes". Shu Fen believes that the Pinmo is similar to the Fenwen; the Nahuiji is similar to the Ruixi; and the Shihuo is similar to the Duhuo.⁷¹ In addition, Sun Jinji asserts that the Danlijie is the same as the Daji; the Yishihuo is the same as the Hebian; the Shihuo, also called

⁶⁹ *LS* 34. 395.

⁷⁰ *Idem* 63. 955.

⁷¹ Shu, Fen 1984, pp. 69-70.

the Shuhuo is the same as the Duhuo; the Nahuiji is the same as the Ruixi; the Jijie is the same as the Zhuijin.⁷² Although not enough sufficient evidence has been offered, it is possible that such kinds of connections existed between these two groups of "eight tribes". Finally, both the *Xin Wudai Shi* and *Wudai Huiyao* record the Dahe eight tribes as Danlijie, Yishihuo, Shihuo, Nawei, Pinmo, Nahuoji, Jijie, and Xiwa, which were recorded in the *Liao Shi* as the so-called "Yaonian eight tribes".⁷³ Matsui states that the names of the Danjieli and others probably began to appear at the end of the Tang.⁷⁴ Therefore, the Chinese historical sources, from the *Xin Wudai Shi* that was compiled in the late 11th Century onwards, name the Dahe Eight Tribes as the Danjieli and others. Since the evidences I provided still seem inadequate, what I made remains conjectural in status.

The eight tribes of the Yila, Yishi, *etc.* are believed the Yaonian eight tribes, because it tallies with the above cited record, "when the Dahe family was on the decline, there were only five tribes left. There was Yelü Yali who divided five tribes into eight". According to the *Liao Shi*, the Yila and Yishi were divided from a single tribe, so were the Wukui and Niela, and the Tulübu and Tuju, adding the other two tribes, the Pin and Chute, there were originally five tribes before the time of Zuwu khaghan.⁷⁵ Since the names of the other three tribes that were missing in the war are not recorded, which tribes they were in the Dahe nuclear eight tribes or the tribes outside of the confederation cannot be known. In the time of Zuwu khaghan, the Khitan social structure underwent a profound reorganization. Nieli assisted Zuwu khaghan to organize tribes by dividing camps. The newly re-organized tribes were the Yila, Yishi, Pin, Chute, Wukui, Niela, Tulübu, and Tuju. These eight tribes developed into the major part of the later twenty tribes of Taizu at the beginning of the 10th Century. In the *Liao Shi* vol. 33, these eight tribes are included in the twenty tribes of Taizu, and the origins of these eight tribes are briefly described. In addition, the *Liao Shi* also provides a brief conclusion of the record on the twenty tribes of Taizu,

以上太祖以遥輦舊部族分置者凡十，增置者八。⁷⁶

The above were the tribes set by emperor Taizu, among which ten tribes were set by dividing the old Yaonian tribes, and another eight were newly added.

It also verifies the hypothesis that the Yila, Yishi, *etc.* were the Yaonian eight tribes. In addition, there were not the so-called "twenty tribes" in the period of

⁷² Sun, Jinji 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 999.

⁷³ *XWDS* 72, p. 886; *WDHY* 29, quoted in Feng, Jiqin *et al.* 1990, p. 57.

⁷⁴ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 98.

⁷⁵ *LS* 33. 385-387.

⁷⁶ *Idem.* p. 388.

Zuwu khaghan. The concept of “twenty tribes” should be established in the dynastic period of the Khitan.

The three Yelüs and two Shenmis, I assume, were the two administrations (Erfu). According to the *Liao Shi*, the three Yelüs including the Dahe, Yaonian, and Shili were of imperial lineages; the two Shenmis including the Yishi and Bali were lineages of the Imperial Maternal Uncles.⁷⁷ The two lineage groups had marriage relationships with each other. In the time of Taizu, these lineages developed into the main part of the later Four Inner Lineages of the Liao that were of imperial lineages and lineages of Imperial Maternal Uncles (Empresses) in the dynastic period of the Khitan. Obviously, the Liao Inner Four Lineages had formed a ruling class over the subjected tribes. Therefore in the period of the Yaonian, the three Yelüs and two Shenmis (the predecessors of the Four Inner Lineages of the Liao) were also the ruling groups over the eight tribes. As the *Liao Shi* records, “set two administrations to control over (the eight tribes)”. In addition to those foregoing mentioned tribes, as before, there were many other Khitan lineages, clans and tribes outside of the eight tribes.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the tradition of eight tribes was still carried out in the period of the Yaonian. Until the time of Taizu who set twenty tribes by including some captured neighboring tribes, the old tradition was finally broken. The theory that the tradition of eight tribes was completely broken in the Yaonian period⁷⁸ probably needs to be reconsidered.

4.4. Leadership Succession in the Pre-dynastic Khitan

The Manchurian Tradition. The Chinese tradition of succession was primogeniture. It was also practiced among other sedentary peoples who were under the Chinese cultural influence. While on the steppe, a hierarchical tradition or “a system of fixed imperial ranks and an accepted set of rules governing the appointment of a new shanyu”⁷⁹ existed. “There was a long tradition among the tribes of the central steppe of drawing leadership from a single dynastic lineage.”⁸⁰ This tradition was shared by the steppe peoples, for examples, the Xiongnu, Mongols and Turkish Ottoman Empire.⁸¹

Having been alien to both of the above traditions, the Manchurian peoples had their own unique tradition of succession to leadership. Following are some re-

⁷⁷ *Idem.* p. 381.

⁷⁸ See Zhao, Weibang 1958, reprinted in Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988, p. 945.

⁷⁹ Barfield 1989, p. 42.

⁸⁰ *Idem.* p. 27.

⁸¹ *Idem.* p. 28.

cords on the patterns of succession among the Manchurian peoples, for examples, the Wuhuan and Xianbei.

Hou Hanshu vol. 90, *Description of the Wuhuan and Xianbei*:

烏桓者，本東胡也。漢初，匈奴冒頓滅其國，餘保烏桓山，因以為號焉 ... 有勇健能理決鬥訟者，推為大人。無世業以繼。⁸²

The Wuhuan were originally the eastern barbarians. At the beginning of the Han Dynasty, the Xiongnu ruler Maodun had destroyed their state, and then the remnants (of the Wuhuan) sought refuge in the Wuhuan Mountains. Because of this, they were called the Wuhuan ... The man who was the bravest and the sturdiest, and who could best decide between litigants and disputants was elected to be the supreme leader. But the position was not hereditary.

Hou Hanshu vol. 90, *Description of the Wuhuan and Xianbei*:

桓帝時，鮮卑檀石槐者，其父投鹿侯，初從匈奴軍三年 ... 年十四五，勇健有智略，異部大人抄取其外家牛羊，檀石槐單騎追擊之，所向無前，悉還得所亡者，由是部落畏服。乃施法禁，平曲直，無敢犯者，遂推以為大人。⁸³

In the time of emperor Huandi (147-167), there was a Xianbei man called Tanshihuai. His father named Touluhou who had served in the Xiongnu army for three years ... When (Tanshihuai) was fourteen or fifteen years old, he was brave and sturdy with talent and ability. Once upon a time, the other tribe's leader robbed his maternal grandparent's herds. Tanshihuai pursued and attacked the enemy alone, and encountered without opposition. Finally, he got all lost herds back. Therefore, he was revered and convinced by the tribes. He then put some laws and regulations in force and decided between litigants. Nobody dared to violate those laws and regulations. Because of this, he was elected to be the supreme leader (of the Xianbei tribes).

The above first piece of record states clearly that the Wuhuan elected "the man who was the bravest and the sturdiest, and who could best decide between litigants and disputants", and that "the position was not hereditary". The second piece of record tells a story of how Tanshihuai became the supreme leader of the Xianbei. It indicates that the pattern of succession of the Xianbei was almost the same as that of the Wuhuan. In deed, in this period the Manchurian pattern "stressed an egalitarian political system with no hereditary succession or hierarchical clan structure".⁸⁴ However, the existence of such kind of succession among Manchurian tribes was periodic. It was changed at the end of the 2nd Century at the latest.

Hou Hanshu vol. 90, *Description of the Wuhuan and Xianbei*:

獻帝初平中，(烏桓)丘里居死，子樓班年少，從子蹋頓有武略，代立。⁸⁵

⁸² *HHS* 90. 2979.

⁸³ *Idem.* 2989.

⁸⁴ Barfield 1989, p. 86.

⁸⁵ *HHS* 90. 2984.

In the years of Chuping (190-193) of emperor Xiandi, when (the Wuhuan leader) Qiuliju died, his son Louban was under age. So his nephew Tadun, who was full of military resource, was elected to success the position, taking the place of (Louban).

Hou Hanshu vol. 90, *Description of the Wuhuan and Xianbei* :

光和中, 檀石槐死, 時年四十五, 子和連代立 ... 自檀石槐後, 諸大人遂世相傳襲.⁸⁶

In the years of Guanghe (178-184), Tanshihuai died at the age of forty-five. His son Helian succeeded the throne ... After the death of Tanshihuai, the succession to the post of (the Xianbei) supreme chieftain then became hereditary.

The above records indicate that since the end of the 2nd Century, the pattern of succession in both the Wuhuan and Xianbei societies had developed from "democratic election" into "hereditary election". It can be also seen that the succession could be either lineal as described in the above second record, or lateral as described in the above first record. Since the Manchurian peoples did not favor the succession of child rulers as the Xiongnu did, the *daren's* brother, cousin or even nephew could take the post if the heir was too young. The later Xianbei tribes, such as the Murong, Duan, Yuwen, Tuoba, *etc.*, had the similar pattern of succession.⁸⁷

Summing up the foregoing discussion, the Manchurian pattern of succession might be described by the following. Over the course of history the pattern of succession had undergone a transformation from "democratic election" into "hereditary election". Initially it was "democratic election", electing leaders based on talent and ability without any other confinements. From the end of the 2nd Century forwards, the pattern had changed into "hereditary election", which elected leaders based on talent and ability, but within a confinement to a single powerful lineage. In other words, that is electing the most virtuous and capable heir among the candidates who were drawn from a single powerful lineage. The form of succession between brothers was favored by the Manchurian peoples over that from father to son. This change happened because the "democratic election" had its own liability in causing instability. Frequent contests for the position of "*daren*" promoted this transformation. The acceptance of the "hereditary election" was probably because of the influence of steppe tradition of succession, which was better for avoiding internal conflicts and could make political stability of the state possible. The steppe tradition of succession to leadership at that time, using the Xiongnu as an example, was post-mortem with hereditary prerogatives.⁸⁸ It is likely that the Manchurian peoples combined the borrowed concept of "hereditary

⁸⁶ *Idem.* 2994

⁸⁷ See *TD* 196. 5371-5377.

⁸⁸ See *HHS* 89. 2939-2967.

prerogative" and their own tradition of "democratic election", and created a new pattern of succession, the "hereditary election".

The "democratic election" was a temporary pattern of succession to leadership of the Manchurian peoples, at least of the Wuhuan and Xianbei. It ended as early as the end of the 2nd Century, according to the historical records. The *Hou Hanshu* clearly states that "after the death of Tanshihuai (178-183), the succession to the position of (the Xianbei) supreme chieftain then became hereditary", even though it was still elective. Moreover, the political structure of the Wuhuan and Xianbei tribes was not egalitarian with ranked clans and lineages after the end of the 2nd Century. The leadership was almost always drawn from a single powerful lineage. Therefore, in my opinion, the theory that the Manchurian pattern "stressed an egalitarian political system with no hereditary succession or hierarchical clan structure"⁸⁹ might need to be reconsidered.

The concepts of hereditary prerogatives and post-mortem succession were probably introduced into Manchuria from the steppe. The exact time cannot be dated. However, these concepts had already existed in the Xianbei and Wuhuan societies as early as the end of the 2nd Century. These concepts were also widely accepted and carried out by the later Manchurian tribes, the descendants of the Xianbei and Wuhuan in the period from the 3rd to 6th Centuries. The following are some examples:

Sanguo Zhi vol. 30, *Description of the Wuhuan, Xianbei and Eastern Barbarians*:

太和二年, 素利死. 子小, 以弟成律歸為王, 代攝其眾.⁹⁰

In the second year of Taihe (228), Suli died. His son was under age, so his younger brother Chenglügui succeeded him to be the king, taking his place to control the subject tribesmen.

Suli was a leader of the eastern section of the Xianbei, who was believed the remote ancestors of the Khitan. It can be seen from the above record that the system of succession to leadership in the eastern section of the Xianbei in the first half of the 3rd Century was hereditary and post-mortem.

Wei Shu vol. 103, *Biography of Yuwen Mohuai of the Xiongnu*:

莫槐虐用其民, 為部人所殺, 更立其弟普拔為大人. 普拔死, 子丘不勤立, ...丘不勤死, 子莫魔立. 莫魔死, 子遜呢延立

遜呢延死, 子乞得龜立.

別部大人逸豆歸殺乞得龜自立.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Barfield 1989, p. 86.

⁹⁰ SGZ 30. 840.

⁹¹ WS 103. 2304-2305.

Mohui was despotic, so that he was killed by his subjects. His younger brother Puba was enthroned to be the supreme leader. After Puba died, his son Qiubuqin was enthroned. ... After Qiubuqin died, his son Mogui was enthroned ... After Mogui died, his son Xun'niyan was enthroned

After Xun'niyan died, his son Qidegui was enthroned.

The chieftain of another tribe Yidegui killed Qidegui and enthroned himself.

The Yuwen, to whom the Khitan and Kumo Xi had subordinated, were on the historical stage from 293 to 345. Their pattern of succession can be seen from the above record was hereditary and post-mortem, with exception of Yidougui's case. In addition, succession from father to son was carried out in most of the cases.

According to the *Wei Shu*, the Duan tribes, who were a branch of the Xianbei, inhabited Liaoxi from the end of the 3rd Century through to the end of the 4th Century. The pattern of succession of the Duan Xianbei was hereditary and post-mortem. In most of the cases, the form of succession was lateral, between brothers, cousins and nephews.⁹²

According to the *Tong Dian*, the Murong Xianbei's pattern of succession in their pre-dynastic period (from middle of the 3rd Century to 333) was hereditary and lineal, that was from father to son. However, the successors were the most brave and talented among the sons of the former leader.⁹³

Also according to the *Wei Shu*, the Tuoba Xianbei's pattern of succession in their pre-dynastic period (from middle of the 3rd Century to 385) was hereditary and post-mortem. The form of succession was sometimes lineal and sometimes lateral.⁹⁴

The Wuluohou, who were believed a component part of the Shiwei tribal complex, inhabited the northwestern part of Manchuria. The Wuluohou's pattern of succession in the period of northern Wei (383-534) is recorded in the *Wei Shu*. It reads, "They had no supreme leader. The position of the tribal chieftain Mofu (Mufuhe) was succeeded hereditarily".⁹⁵

The model of post-mortem succession with hereditary prerogatives was originally a steppe tradition, which could be found in the Xiongnu society during the period from the 3rd Century B.C. to the 2nd Century. It was probably introduced into Manchurian societies at the end of the 2nd Century, if not earlier. However, throughout several hundred years development, it had already become a Manchurian tradition. This could be clearly verified in the above examples. It was impossible that the Khitan, as descendants of the Xianbei and a Manchurian people, were not influenced by their ancestors and close neighbors in the system

⁹² *Idem*. 2305-2306.

⁹³ *TD* 196. 5372-5373.

⁹⁴ *WS* 1. 1-17.

⁹⁵ *Idem* 103. 2224.

of succession to leadership over hundreds of year's historical development. Therefore, the Holmgren's hypothesis that the concepts of hereditary prerogatives and post-mortem succession were introduced into the Khitan society during the early period of Turkish control between 586 and the 620s⁹⁶ seems somewhat dubious.

The Khitan Pattern of Succession. The *Materials* {29} has collected almost all of the existing information on the Khitan pattern of succession in the pre-dynastic period. From these records, the Khitan pattern of succession can be summed up by three key points: (1). There existed a confederation meeting, in which chieftains of the eight tribes gathered together every three years to elect a supreme leader of the confederation and to discuss some other important affairs. (2). The post of supreme chieftain of the Khitan was rotated in turn among the chieftains of the eight tribes. (3). The position of supreme chieftain was replaced every three years.

Some modern scholars roughly accept these records. Matsui generally agreed with the records in *Materials* {29}, but he speculated that the rotation of the post of supreme leader of the confederation might have been after the An/Shi Rebellion (755-763).⁹⁷ Yao Congwu also states that the records, which from the *Zizhi Tongjian Kaoyi* and *Luting Zaji* in the *Zizhi Tongjian* on the Khitan succession, were roughly believable. However, he stresses the eligibility for election, i.e. that only members of a specially designated clan of a certain powerful tribe had the right to be elected.⁹⁸ Cai Meibiao has the similar viewpoint. He goes further and clearly points out that the supreme chieftain of the Dahe confederation were all confined to the Dahe clan, that the supreme chieftains of the Yaonian confederation were all confined to the Yaonian family, and that the military chief of the Yaonian confederation (Yilijin of the Yila tribe) were all confined to the Yelü lineage.⁹⁹ In his work *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China*, Barfield describes the succession to leadership of the Khitan, "Confederation leadership itself occasionally moved from one tribe to another following military defeats. At the tribal central authority was even more restricted, with leaders being elected to three-year terms", in order to declare that the supreme chieftain of the Khitan "had only a limited amount of power because the component tribes were largely autonomous."¹⁰⁰ Twitchett & Klaus-peter still believe that "every three years the chieftains of the eight tribes gathered together to elect (or confirm in his office) one of their number to serve as khaghan of the

⁹⁶ Holmgren 1986, p. 45

⁹⁷ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 122.

⁹⁸ Yao, Congwu 1954. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1044-1045.

⁹⁹ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 969, 977-978.

¹⁰⁰ Barfield 1989, p. 169.

confederation", although they claim that a hereditary leadership existed in the Dahe and Yiaonian families.¹⁰¹

On the contrary, some other scholars are more or less suspicious about the records of the Khitan succession in *Materials* {29}. Chu Shu denied the existence of the rotation of leadership among the eight tribes in both the Dahe and Yaonin periods. He maintained that only one of the eight tribes was eligible for election, the other seven tribes had only the right to vote, but not to be elected. In other words, the election was based upon talent and ability and was confined to a specially designated clan of a certain tribe. In addition, he also explains that the term of office did not have three-year limitation. The three-year limitation was probably an old tradition of the Khitan.¹⁰² Yang Zhijiu states that democratic election and three-year limitation of office were not the Khitan institutions in the period of the Tang.¹⁰³ Zhang Qufei simply claims that both the rotation of leadership among the eight tribes and the three-year limitation of office were old traditions of the Khitan.¹⁰⁴

Concerning this issue, Holmgren makes a more elaborate and thorough investigation. She respectively examines the history of the three great families, the Dahe, Yaonian and Yelü, and the development of hereditary factors in the pre-dynastic period of the Khitan by making many interesting hypotheses, even though some of the hypotheses she makes are based on insufficient grounds. Her principle theory is that "the concept of hereditary succession did not become an accepted part of Khitan throughout until the latter part of the Liao during the eleventh and twelfth centuries", apart from the case of Yelü.¹⁰⁵ As for the case of Dahe, Holmgren maintains, "the existence of hereditary factors in the transmission of office was a product of domination by outside forces".¹⁰⁶ On the Case of Yaonian, she accepts the main points of the records in *Materials* {29}, postulating that the system of succession to office in the Yaonian period "embraced the concept of elective, short-term office with rotation between a number of different clans".¹⁰⁷ Regarding the case of Yelü, she states that in much the same manner as the leadership of the confederation, at tribal level, the leadership of the I-la (Yila) rotated among different clans and was characterized by pre-mortem. In addition, she claims, at tribal level, "hereditary factors played a

¹⁰¹ Twitchett & Tietze. In Franke & Twitchitt, eds., 1994, p. 52.

¹⁰² Chen, Shu 1947. Repr. in: Sun, Jinjin *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1006-1007.

¹⁰³ Yang, Zhijiu 1948. Repr. in: Sun, Jinjin *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 224.

¹⁰⁴ Zhang, Qufei 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinjin *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 1000-1001.

¹⁰⁵ Holmgren 1986, p. 74.

¹⁰⁶ *Idem*, p. 55.

¹⁰⁷ *Idem*, p. 58.

significant role in succession to office of *i-li-chin* (Yilijin)".¹⁰⁸ However, she points out that the concept of "hereditary prerogative were borrowed from groups outside the mainstream Khitan society".¹⁰⁹ Her contribution also presents in querying the reliability of the records on succession to leadership of the pre-dynastic in the *Liao Shi*.

However, after carefully examining some historical facts that are recorded in the other historical materials, it can be also found that the records in *Materials* {29} in sharp contrast some historical facts concerning the Khitan system of succession to leadership, which are recorded in the other historical sources. In other words, in available materials I have not found any evidence that the Khitan had ever practiced such a pattern of succession in electing a supreme chieftain in both the Tahe and Yaonian periods. Therefore, the records in *Materials* {29} need to be re-examined. In addition, the theories that are based on these records are somewhat questionable.

The succession to leadership, in the period of the ancient eight tribes, was not recorded in available sources. However there is a description in the *Songchao Shishi Leiyuan*, it reads:

契丹之先, 有一男子, 乘白馬. 一女駕灰牛, 相遇遼上, 遂為夫婦, 生八子, 則前史所謂迭為君長者也. 此事得於趙志忠, 志忠嘗為契丹史臣, 必其真也.? ... 嘗以書問其八男子迭相君長時為中原何代. 志忠亦不能答, 而云約是秦漢時, 恐非也.¹¹⁰

In the early history of the Khitan, there was a man riding a white horse and a woman riding a cart drawn by a gray ox. They met on the Liao River and then became husband and wife. They had eight sons who were called by the previous histories the persons who took turns to be the supreme leader. This event was known from Zhao Zhizhong who had been an official historian of the Khitan, so that it must be true ... (Zhizhong) was asked which dynasty the Central Plain was in, when the leadership rotated among the eight (Khitan) men. Zhizhong could not answer, but he said that it probably was in the Qin/Han period. (I) am afraid that it was not true.

This story reflects that there is a strong possibility that, like the Wuhuan and Xianbei in their early histories, the Khitan system of succession was a democratic election in the remote ancient times (corresponding to the Qin/Han period from 221 B.C. to A.D. 24). Basically there was probably a tradition of rotating leadership among the eight tribes. Yet it was likely replaced by the pattern of drawing the leadership from a single powerful lineage based on talent and ability at the beginning of Dahe tribal confederation at the latest. The cases of the great families, the Dahe, Yaonian and Yelü of the Khitan, in their pre-dynastic period will be examined respectively below.

¹⁰⁸ *Idem*, p. 69.

¹⁰⁹ *Idem*, p. 75.

¹¹⁰ Jiang, Shaoyu 1981, p. 1019.

In the period of the Dahe confederation (beginning of the 7th Century-730s), the situation of succession to leadership could be found in the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu*. The successive supreme chieftains were: Duoluo, Mohui, Kuge, Abugu, Jinzhong, Shihuo, Suogu, Yuyu, Tuyu, Shaogu.

These supreme chieftains were all from the Dahe lineage, except for Abugu whose lineage affiliation cannot be found in available sources.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, Otagi believes, “From Abugu to Li Jinzhong, who succeeded Kuge to be in the position of the Governor-general of Songmo, were all descendants of Kuge”.¹¹² According to the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu* and *Liao Shi*, Jinzhong was Kuge's grandson; Shihuo was Jinzhong's younger cousin; Suogu was Shihuo's younger brother; Yuyu was Suogu's younger cousin; Tuyu was Yuyu's younger brother; and Shaogu was Tuyu's younger brother and also Jinzhong's younger brother.¹¹³ It indicates that the succession was confined to the Dahe lineage. Moreover, in sharp contrast to primogeniture, the Khitan's succession to leadership was not necessarily from the father to son but followed a pattern common among the nomadic peoples, in which brothers, cousins or even nephews rather than sons often succeeded to a title. In most of the cases, it was in a lateral line, i.e., among brothers, uncles and cousins. In addition, from Duoluo to Shaogu there were ten supreme chieftains, and the period lasted for one hundred and seventeen years.¹¹⁴ In average, each supreme chieftain had over ten years in office. Furthermore Kuge, Jinzhong, Shihuo and Yuyu died at the post; Suogu and Shaogu were murdered by Ketuyu; and Tuyu was forced to flee to the Tang. From the above description, it can be seen that there was no any indication that this post was replaced in turn among the eight tribes, or that the leadership was elected every three years. The supreme chieftains were almost all from the Dahe family. Concerning the concepts of hereditary prerogative and post-mortem succession, Holmgren speculates that these concepts were introduced into the Khitan society by the Türks, when the Khitan were under the Turkish domination in the period between 586 and the 620s. My argument is that these concepts as the steppe traditions were introduced into the Xianbei, the ancestors of the Khitan at the end of the 2nd Century, if not earlier. It was much earlier than the period between 586 and the 620s as Holmgren suggests. Most of the later Xianbei tribes carried on and practiced hereditary election as a pattern of succession to leadership during the period from the 3rd to 6th Centuries. Examples and analyses were given in “The Manchurian tradition” above. The pattern of hereditary election, which embrace concept of hereditary prerogative, had already become a Manchurian

¹¹¹ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 969.

¹¹² Otagi 1987, p. 144.

¹¹³ Cf. *JTS* 219. 5350-5352; *XTS* 199. 6168-6170; *LS* 63. 953-955.

¹¹⁴ *JTS* 199. 5350-5352.

tradition much earlier than the Khitan had become an independent political force at the end of the 4th Century. It is more likely that the concept of hereditary prerogative had existed in the Khitan society much earlier than the period between 586 and the 620s. As for the rotation of leadership, Holmgren claims that hereditary prerogatives were of little significance in the transmission of authority at confederation level when Chinese control was removed. She uses the case of Sun Wanrong as an example to illustrate, "the position of supreme leader should alternate between the families concerned".¹¹⁵ However, the Chinese historical sources, the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Tang Huiyao* and *Zizhi Tongjian*, only state, "(Li) Jinzhong died and (Sun) Wanrong acted on his behalf to command the masses (of the Khitan)". None of the above sources mention that Sun Wanrong achieved the post of supreme chieftain of the confederation.¹¹⁶ In my opinion, Sun Wanrong was only an acting military leader of the confederation temporarily, in case of war. Shihuo, Jinzhong's cousin, succeeded Jinzhong to be supreme chieftain of the confederation after the war ended. The position of leadership of the Dahe family was not challenged. There seems to be no indication that the position of supreme leader alternated between families. Sun Wanrong's temporarily commanding the Khitan masses in case of war seems difficult to support Holmgren's statement that "hereditary prerogatives were of little significance in the transmission of authority at confederation level". During the period from 720 to 735, Ketuyu, the military chief of the Dahe confederation, held virtual power over the Khitan. He even manipulated the transmission of leadership at confederation level. Nevertheless, he never thought to enthrone himself and to challenge the authority of the Dahe. It is more likely that Ketuyu was restricted by the Khitan tradition of succession to office, which was drawing leadership from a specially designated single family. The case of Ketuyu also confirms the validity of my contention that hereditary factors had already existed in the Khitan society in the period of the Dahe from the beginning of the 7th Century to the 730s.

In the period of the Yaonian confederation (the 730s-906), there were two genealogical lines of leadership. One was the post of Khaghan (supreme chieftain of the confederation) monopolized by the Yaonian family; and the other was the post of Yilijin (the tribal leader of the Yila tribe and military chief of the confederation) monopolized by the Yelü clan.

The succession to office of the Yaonian khaghans was recorded in the *Liao Shi* vol. 45. There were nine khaghans who were all from the Yaonian lineage in this period: the Wa khaghan, Zuwu khaghan, Hula khaghan, Su khaghan, Xianzhi khaghan, Zhaogu khaghan, Yelan khaghan, Bala khaghan and Hendejin

¹¹⁵ Holmgren 1986, p. 51.

¹¹⁶ *JTS* 199. 5351; *THY* 96. 1718; *ZZTJ* 205. 6510.

khaghan.¹¹⁷ In this period, the post of supreme chieftain was called khaghan (kehan in Chinese). This steppe title was taken, due to the Turkish influence upon the Khitan in the period when the Khitan were Turkish vassals. The *Liao Shi* has made attempts to identify the above nine khaghans. According to the *Liao Shi*, Qulie was identical to the Wa khaghan, Huaixiu was identical to the Zuwu khaghan, Qushu was identical to the Yelan khaghan, Xi'er was identical to the Bala khaghan and Qinde was identical to the Hendeji khaghan.¹¹⁸ Shu Fen speculates that Xi'er was probably identical to the Xianzhi khaghan.¹¹⁹ However, the Hula khaghan, Su khaghan, Xianzhi khaghan (or Bala Khaghan), and Zhaogu khaghan remained unidentified. From Qulie to Qinde, there were about one hundred and seventy-six years. In average, each khaghan had nearly twenty years in office. From the above description, it can be seen that the succession to leadership in this period was almost the same as that in the Dahe period. The supreme leadership was occupied by the Yaonian lineage, and the replacement of the leadership did not have a three-year limitation. It is likely that the supreme chieftains of the Yaonian confederation were elected by leaders of the eight component tribes at a confederation meeting. However, only the members of the Yaonian clan were eligible for supreme leadership of the Khitan, the others had only the right to vote.

According to the *Liao Shi*, the two ceremonies for electing supreme leaders (or emperors in the dynastic period) of the Khitan, the Caice Yi (Recognition Ceremony) and Zaisheng Yi (Rebirth Ceremony), were formulated by Zuwu khaghan.¹²⁰ The ceremonies were not necessarily made by Zuwu khaghan. The *Liao Shi* links the Zuwu khaghan with the formulation of the two ceremonies probably in order to honor the Zuwu khaghan, the believed ancestor of the imperial family of the Liao. Nevertheless, it is likely that the two ceremonies were formulated before the founding of the Khitan state. Therefore, in the period of the Yaonian or at least the latter part of the period, the Caice Yi and Zaisheng Yi, were practiced, when supreme leaders were elected. As Chen Shu has stated, "There are some records on practicing this ceremony (Caice Yi) in the period of the Yaonian. So that it is quite clear that it was an old folk custom".¹²¹

Regarding the system of succession to office in the Yaonian period, Holmgren still claims, "Hereditary factors played no significant role at confederation level".¹²² She maintains that the position of the supreme leadership at con-

¹¹⁷ *LS* 45. 711.

¹¹⁸ *Idem* 63. 956-957.

¹¹⁹ Shu, Fen 1984, p. 87.

¹²⁰ *LS* 49. 833.

¹²¹ Chen Shu 1948, p. 65.

¹²² Holmgren 1986, p. 58.

federation level rotated among a number of different clans, and the term of office had a three-year limitation.¹²³ However, these conclusions are contrary to the historical facts. The root of the mistakes she made is erroneously regarding the tribal leaders in the period from 794 to 839 (recorded in the *Tang Huiyao*) as supreme leaders of the confederation. Both statements of the rotation of leadership among different clans and the triennial basis of tenure are deduced and calculated from misusing a piece of information in *the Tang Huiyao*.¹²⁴ After carefully examining this piece of information in the *Tang Huiyao*, it can be seen that the Khitan leaders who presented tributes to the Tang court from 794 to 839 were titled "*Shouling* (chieftain)", "*Da Shouling* (great chieftain)", "envoy", or someone under the "*Shouling* (chieftain)". However, in the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu*, and *Zizhi Tongjian* almost all the supreme chieftains of both the Dahe and Yaonian confederations were titled "*Khitan Wang* (king)", "*Jun* (monarch)" or "*Zhu* (lord)"¹²⁵, if not "khaghan" titled by the *Liao Shi*. Even in the *Tang Huiyao* itself, almost all the supreme leaders of the confederation, before and after the period from 794 to 839, were titled "*Wang* (king)" or "*Zhu* (lord)".¹²⁶ However, none of the eight leaders during the period from 794 to 839 recorded in the *Tang Huiyao* were titled "*Wang* (king)", "*Jun* (monarch)" or "*Zhu* (lord)". It can be seen that the Khitan leaders who presented tributes to the Tang court in the period from 794 to 839 (as recorded in the *Tang Huiyao*) were probably tribal leaders. Cautiously, at least some of them were tribal leaders, but not supreme leaders of the confederation, since an "envoy" and the person who under the "*Shouling* (chieftain)" must not be supreme chieftains of the confederation; and "*Shouling* (chieftain)" are usually used to title the tribal chieftains of the Khitan in the Chinese historical sources. The Chinese specialist Chen Shu has pointed out such kind of mistake as early as 1948 in his work *Qidan Shi Lunzheng Gao*.¹²⁷ Therefore, the validity of Holmgren's statements, which are deduced by misusing the piece of record in the *Tang Huiyao*, needs to be queried.

The post of military chief of the confederation began to come into being at the end of the Dahe period at the beginning of the 8th Century. Ketuyu, who initiated a series of coups and who finally ended the authority of the Dahe family, was the first military chief of the Khitan confederation recorded in the historical sources. However, his origin is unknown. The post of the military chief was not fixed in the period of the Dahe (from the beginning of the 7th Century to 730s). The post began to be fixed in the period of the Yaonian (from the 730s to 906).

¹²³ *Idem*.

¹²⁴ *Idem*, p. 57-59; *THY* 96. 1718-1719.

¹²⁵ Cf. *JTS* 199. 5350-5354; *XTS* 219. 6168-6172; *ZZTJ* 212-215. 6733-6864.

¹²⁶ *THY* 96. 1717-1719.

¹²⁷ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 58.

Thereafter, the military chief of the Yaonian confederation was drawn from a certain clan of a certain tribe. The Yelü family, which was subordinate to the Yila tribe, began to monopolize the post of military chief of the confederation as early as 734, if not earlier. Guozhe (Yujie), who is known from the historical materials as the first military chief of the Yaonian confederation, was from the Yishihuo (the Shuhuo) tribe (the predecessor of the Yila).¹²⁸ Yilijin, as a title of tribal leader of the Yila tribe, began to appear in the time of Nieli (Nieli was at post from 735 to 746?). Since Nieli, the Yilijin (the tribal leader) of the Yila tribe had concurrently held the post of military chief of the confederation. Nieli was believed by the *Liao Shi* the earliest ancestor of the imperial family of the Liao. It can be seen that the Yelü family began to grow from the beginning of the Yaonian period. In the period of the Yaonian, the functions and powers of Yilijin, were extended. The men titled Yilijin not only took responsibility for military affairs, but also took charge of economic activities and even held jurisdiction over criminal law.¹²⁹ The power of Yilijin had almost always exceeded that of the supreme chieftain of the confederation in the period of the Yaonian. It was because of the power of Yilijin, the Yila tribe (from which the Yelü came) had become powerful and could not have been restricted in the whole period of the Yaonian.¹³⁰ The succession to the post of Yilijin was the same as that of the supreme chieftain in hereditary election, but different in the term of office. According to the *Liao Shi*, all the men who held the office of Yilijin were the descendants of Nieli, i.e., that they were all from the same family, the Yelü of the Yila tribe. However, the form of succession was not directly lineal, but between cousins, as well as brothers, fathers and sons.¹³¹ The Yilijin was probably elected based on talent and ability, as suggested by the *Luting Zaji* in *Materials* {29(4)}. Only the members of the Yelü clan of the Yila tribe had the prerogative right to be the candidates. The members of the other clans had only the right to vote, but not stand for election. Holmgren also agrees, "Hereditary factors played a significant role in succession to the office of *I-li-jin* (Yilijin) where leadership of I-la (Yila) was concerned".¹³² As for the term of office of Yilijin, Holmgren's argument is reasonable. She states from inference, "The position of *I-li-jin* (Yilijin) rotated on a triennial basis".¹³³ However, the term of office was not necessarily three years. It could possibly be extended. As suggested by Zhao Zhizhong in *Materials* {29(4)}, "If there no calamity occurred, herds were increasing in number, and people lived in peace

¹²⁸ See Chinese cultural influence and the founding of the Khitan Empire in 6.6. of Chapter 6.

¹²⁹ Cf. *LS* 116. 1543, 61. 935, & 2. 24.

¹³⁰ *Idem* 32. 381.

¹³¹ Holmgren 1986, p. 67.

¹³² *Idem*, p. 69.

¹³³ *Idem*.

and contentment, the supreme leader was not replaced". Therefore, it can be seen from the *Liao Shi* that some men titled Yilijin had held the post on more than one occasion. For example, one of Suzu's sons Tiela had held the post of Yilijin on nine occasions; and one of Xuanzu's sons Yanmu had held the post on three occasions.¹³⁴ There were nineteen Yilijins in the pre-dynastic period of the Khitan. From Nieli to Abaoji, there were about one hundred seventy-six years.¹³⁵ In average, each Yilijin had about nine years at the post. Nine can be divided by three, so that it was on a triennial basis. In addition, Abaoji was appointed the Yilijin of the Yila tribe in 901, and declared himself emperor of the state in 907.¹³⁶ Between 901 and 907, there were six years, which also can be divided by three. Therefore, it was also on a triennial basis. It is quite clear that the old tradition of succession to office with a three-year limitation was retained in the form of succession to office of Yilijin at tribal level.

According to the *Liao Shi*, the two ceremonies Chaiye Yi and Zaisheng Yi were also practiced, when the Yilijin was elected.¹³⁷ The Chaiye Yi and Zaisheng Yi were inherited later in the dynastic period of the Khitan, as symbolic ceremonies practiced by emperors when they ascended the throne.¹³⁸ All the Yilijins were elected along hereditary lines from the Yelü lineage, to which the earliest ancestor of the Liao, Nieli was affiliated. There was no rotation of leadership among different clans in the succession to office of the Yilijin. However, the term of office of the Yilijin had a three-year limitation. The case of the Yelü is an example of succession to leadership at tribal level when the Yila tribe was concerned. The system of succession in the other Khitan tribes is not directly recorded in the available historical sources. However a speculation could be probably made that it might have been also hereditary election, which was the same as or similar to that in the Yila tribe. Because hereditary election was still carried out select the bureaucratic officials in the dynastic period of the Khitan. And the Khitan officials in their dynastic period were drawn from the certain clans of the specially designated tribes, as stated in an imperial edict recorded in the *Liao Shi*.¹³⁹ For the Khitan, the officials in the dynastic period were almost equal to the tribal leaders in the pre-dynastic times. So that selecting officials in the dynastic period was just like selecting tribal leaders in the pre-dynastic times.

¹³⁴ *LS* 64. 692-693.

¹³⁵ *Idem* 64. 962-963 & 65. 1013-1019.

¹³⁶ *Idem* 1. 1-3.

¹³⁷ *LS* 112. 1498.

¹³⁸ *Idem* 49. 836.

¹³⁹ *LS* 20. 237.

The term "Shixuan (hereditary election)", which "was electing the ablest person from a certain confinement",¹⁴⁰ is mentioned in the *Liao Shi* to define a way to elect imperial officials.¹⁴¹ The pattern of succession to leadership of the Dahe and Yaonian confederations, as well as the succession to office of the Yilijin at tribal level, as described above, could be also called "Shixuan". As Chen Shu claims, "the election of imperial officials is the epitome of the election of great khaghan".¹⁴² In the *Nianer Shi Taji*, Zhao Yi claims, "The system of "Shixuan" was an old tradition of the Khitan. It did start prior to the period of Liao Taizu".¹⁴³ It means that the system of "Shixuan" that embraces the concept of hereditary prerogatives had already existed in the Khitan society before the founding of the Liao. Chen Shu accepts this statement and takes the step further by saying, "The pattern of election in both cases of the Dahe and the Yaonian was the examples of "Shixuan". Such a pattern could be regarded as the origin of the hereditary election in selecting bureaucratic officials (in the dynastic period)".¹⁴⁴

From the above discussion, it can be seen that the Khitan system of succession followed the Manchurian tradition. There had been a tradition of rotating leadership among eight tribes on a triennial basis in the remote ancient times, as described in the historical sources in *Materials* {29}. However, this tradition had been replaced by the system of "Shixuan", i.e. electing a leader based on talent and ability, but the eligibility for leadership was confined to a single powerful lineage, since the beginning of the Dahe confederation at the latest. In both cases of the Dahe and Yaonian at confederation level, the leadership was drawn from a single powerful family without either rotation of office among different clans (or different tribes) or a three-year limitation of office. In case of Yelü, the system of leadership succession almost followed the pattern of the Dahe and Yaonian in hereditary election at confederation level. However, the old tradition of pre-mortem succession on a triennial basis was still retained in succession of the Yelü leadership of the Yila tribe at tribal level. Nevertheless, the situation at tribal level was examined in the case of Yila. The system of leadership in other tribes still remains unknown, because of paucity of information on this issue. In the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan, both Ketuyu and Nieli, who were from lineages outside of the leadership lineage, had taken power for sometime with personal talent and ability, but they both never challenged the Dahe or the Yaonian's hereditary privilege to rule and never attempted to usurp their position themselves. The *Liao Shi* clearly states, "Yali (Nieli) declined to be the supreme leader,

¹⁴⁰ Chen Shu 1948, p. 68.

¹⁴¹ *LS* 17. 203 & 19. 229.

¹⁴² Chen, Shu 1948, p. 67.

¹⁴³ *Nianer Shi Taji* vol. 27, cited in Chen, Shu 1948, p. 67.

¹⁴⁴ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 68.

because he **should not** be enthroned".¹⁴⁵ Probably this implies that they were restricted by the tradition of drawing leadership from a single powerful lineage. Briefly, the Khitan's pattern of succession to leadership was to elect the most virtuous and capable heir among the candidates who were always drawn from a single powerful lineage. In other words, the concept of hereditary prerogatives had already existed in the Khitan society before the establishment of the Liao. Yet the old tradition of election based on talent and ability still remained. The system of "Shixuan (hereditary election)" was, therefore, the combination of these two elements (the hereditary factors and the quest for ability). Furthermore, the Khitan favored the traditional Manchurian form of lateral succession between brothers rather than the lineal succession from father to son, particularly in their pre-dynastic period. It is also needed to notice that there was an essential distinction between "hereditary election" and "hereditary succession". "Hereditary election" was a kind of election, which emphasized talent and ability, but the eligibility for leadership was confined by pedigree. However, "hereditary succession" was a kind of succession, in which bloodline was the only concern. When emperor Shengzong was enthroned in 982, the Khitan began to carry out the system of primogeniture, a kind of hereditary succession, which had particular emphases on birthright and direct line of descent. The practice of primogeniture was definitely a result of the sinification of the Khitan.

¹⁴⁵ *LS* 73. 1220.

CHAPTER 5. THE ECONOMIC BASIS

5.1. Reconstructing An Economic History

Studying the Khitan's economic development in its pre-dynastic period, not only can obtain some knowledge of the economic situation of the Khitan at their early stage, but also makes possible to recognize the economic backing, from which the Khitan developed from some tribal units into an imperial state. Since my dissertation is aimed at exploring the history of pre-dynastic Khitan, and the reasons why the Khitan could found a powerful state at the very time when the Chinese Tang Dynasty collapsed, an understanding of the economic basis of the pre-dynastic Khitan has much its significance in my research. Furthermore it could also be regarded as a fundamental basis for the Khitan's social, cultural, and political development.

Concrete data on the economic life of the so-called "barbarians" along the Chinese northern frontier, however, are rarely found in the historical records compiled by the Confucian scholars. Although "classic dynastic histories of imperial China normally contained extensive accounts of the foreign peoples along its borders",¹ these records have paid much more attention on the political relations between China and those foreign peoples rather than on the foreign peoples' own social and economic development. "Because the nomads of the northern frontier traditionally constituted a major foreign policy problem for China, they were treated in some detail."² From these Chinese scholars' perspectives, barbarians were despised as cruel animals with greedy, aggressive and of an acquisitive nature. The details of their way of life were regarded as not worthy to be recorded. Concerning the economic situation of the Khitan at their early stage, little information is contained in the related historical documents. Therefore, the image of the Khitan's economic life has been wrapped in obscurity for ages.

In the area of Khitan studies, the pre-dynastic period appears to be the most ignored period in the Khitan history. Because of the lack of historical sources, comparatively little research has been devoted to the economic history of the pre-dynastic Khitan. Up to present, to my personal knowledge, it seems that there is not any specific and systematic research work pertaining to this particular field has been carried out in either the Chinese, Japanese or Western academic circles. Even if when this field is touched, the description seems to be a bit too sketchy or as a small part of a work, without scientific analysis and systematic approach.

¹ Barfield 1989, preface, p. xi.

² *Idem.*

However, with the help of the fragmentary data and systematic analyses, the rough contour of the Khitan's economic life could possibly be portrayed. The fragmentary, indirect and inadequate materials leave plenty room for making inferences or hypotheses, which can be regarded as a methodology in historical research. Such inferences or hypotheses, certainly, should be built upon the historical sources no matter how fragmentary or indirect they are.

The aim of this study is first to arrange and analyze the materials that appear fragmentary and indirect but still somewhat related to the economic situation of the pre-dynastic Khitan. Then, building on the material arrangement, I will attempt a systematic research on the development of the Khitan's economic basis in its pre-dynastic period. Furthermore, personal arguments on some specific problems within this field are expected to present in this chapter.

5.2. The Ecological Environment of the Khitan

The habitat of the pre-dynastic Khitan was in the southwestern part of Manchuria, near the upper course of the western Liao River. At its largest extent, it covered an area that reached the Tao'er river basin to the north, Youzhou and Jizhou of China to the South, the nearby regions of the modern Hexigten Banner to the west and the Liao River to the east.³ This territory consisted of abundant grassland with Gobi desert, river plains and more mountainous parts.

Most part of this territory was dominated by the so-called Liaoxi steppe, which laid as a large gap between the Great Xing'an Range and the Nulu'erhu Mountains. Two bigger tributaries of the western Liao River in its upper course, the Shira Muren and the Laoha, flowed through the heart of the land, providing water for the surrounding regions. In the Liaoxi steppe "rolling grasslands extended beyond the plateau into Manchuria. This was the home of an important nomadic population similar in culture to those found in Mongolian plateau, but with a distinct political history and tradition".⁴ This region was the political and economic center of the Khitan and from where their ancestors originated. The Muye Mountain, which was located on the confluence of the Shira Muren and the Laoha, was believed by the Khitan people to be their ancestral home. Within this area, with the exception of the Gobi Desert, the regions drained by tributaries of the Shira Muren and the Laoha providing nice pasture for the Khitan nomads; and the fertile river plains and marshes made it possible for some agriculture, while the rivers were also good for fishing. On the northwestern edge ran the Great Xing'an Range, which stretches far north to reach the northern border of Manchuria. In the southeastern part of this territory ranged the Nulu'erhu, the

³ See 1.4. of Chapter 1 for details.

⁴ Barfield 1989, p. 19.

Daqing and the Songling Mountains, geographically separated from the Manchurian plain of the lower Liao River valley. These Mountainous parts were covered with forests of pine, elm, willow and other trees. The forests teemed with game, chiefly deer, but also wild pigs, tigers and bears, which were suitable for hunting also some forest products, could be made.⁵ On some gentle slopes of the mountains, summer rains provided the necessary moisture for pasturing grounds. The margin of the Khitan's habitat to the south, which linked with north China, was a transitional zone that could support either nomads or farmers. Throughout the history of the relationship between China and the nomadic world of the steppe, this frontier region had become either a frontier market or battlefield alternatively.

"Economic and political institutions, like all others, develop in definite geographical foundations".⁶ Such a complicated ecological environment determined that diversified modes of production might have coexisted in the economic structure of the pre-dynastic Khitan, including stockbreeding, hunting, fishing and rough agriculture.

Moreover the Khitan lived between the camel-breeders of the steppe and the pig-eaters of the east. To the west, there was the Mongolian steppe where pastoralism was commonly practiced; to the south, there was China Proper, the world's largest agrarian region; and to the east, there was the Liaodong Plain, which was inhabited by the Tungus peoples.⁷ The people who practiced agriculture and pig breeding were called "big breeder" by their Turkish brothers.⁸ Living in such a geographical location, the Khitan people were inevitably influenced by both nomadic and sedentary cultures in their life style and social traditions.

5.3. The Economic Development of the Pre-dynastic Khitan

The two accounts of the *Liao Shi* vol. 59 in *Materials* {16(2)} show us that the economic structure of the Khitan consisted mainly of stockbreeding, particularly horse and sheep raising, hunting and fishing. There were also some primitive handicrafts, such as wool spinning and weaving, hide tanning, cart making and some other professions as complementary elements in this framework. In my opinion, however, these handicrafts might have not yet been completely separated from the mainstays; therefore, they could not be regarded as independent professions at least before the 9th Century. The term "qiuliang" can be found in the *Liao Shi* vol. 59. It precisely means "dried cereals or grains" in classical Chinese. Whatever these cereal products were produced by themselves or extorted from

⁵ Cf. Franke. In Sinor ed., 1990, p. 402.

⁶ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 41.

⁷ *Idem.* p. 23.

⁸ *Idem.* p. 42.

outside world through trade or raid cannot be known, yet it is possible that the Khitan might have had some agriculture no matter how rough it was. In fact, the cultivation activities might have been done by subdued farmers, but not by the ethnic Khitans. However that agriculture did not done by the ethnic Khitans does not mean that agriculture had not existed in the Khitan society, for the Chinese refugees and other conquered agrarian peoples should be regarded as political Khitans in the end of pre-dynastic period of the Khitan. Briefly, in the economic structure, stockbreeding was the mainstay, while among the rest of subsidiary professions hunting was mostly valued by the Khitan people. Moreover, the Khitan way of life would be described as a mode of nomadic migration, moving from one place to another searching of water and grass. They made their homes in the moving carts, following the circle of the seasons. It was extremely alien to the neighboring sedentary civilizations. In short, the Khitan tribes "lived a nomadic life with animal husbandry as the economic mainstay and hunting and fishing as subsidiary occupations. From such a mixed tribal economy, the Khitan rose, fought, and flourished."⁹

The period of the Ancient Eight Tribes. 1. The remote ancient times. An ancient legend recorded in the *Qidan Guozhi* has mirrored the feature of the Khitan's productive activities and life style at their early stage. See *Materials* {1(1)}. From this record, I will try to make the following hypotheses. This absurd legendary story probably was a composition of the obscure and fragmentary pieces of memory, which were kept by the Khitan people in their early life. It could be presumed to be a personalized description of some periods at the early stage of the Khitan history. The three lords mentioned in this legend might refer to three different historical periods. In the first period (the time of "lord Naihe"), their living conditions were incredibly miserable. With very low productivity, they could not support themselves with enough necessities. In addition, with the threat of the natural calamities and fierce wild animals, they were always struggling for existence, on the verge of death. It could be easily imaginable that people would often die of frost, starvation, disease and attacks from the fierce animals. As a result, skeletal remains were the only reminders, which give a dim impression of that period of life. However, the sacrifices of "white horse" and "gray ox" seem to indicate that they were already involved horse and cattle breeding, no matter how sophisticated it was. "The felt blanket" of the first lord provides a piece if evidence that the Khitan's ancestors probably had known how to make felt at that time. In the second period (the time of "lord Waihe"), since head and skin of wild pig kept in their memory to be the impression of this particular period, it can be inferred that they might have had richer experiences

⁹ *Idem.* p. 115.

and higher skills in hunting so that they captured a comparatively large number of prey mainly wild pigs. Nevertheless, the prey was so important in their daily life that they would be in an awkward predicament without them. In the third period (the time of "lord Zhouli Hunhe"), it can be proposed that their stockbreeding had appeared in an embryonic condition after generations of development. Under normal conditions they were capable of keeping the herd at stable numbers and could provide them subsistence with basic necessities. Sheep seemed to be by far the most important animal raised and the mainstay of the Khitan's preliminary pasturage at this stage.

2. The period of the Northern Wei. Due to the harshness of the physical environment and the limitation of productive capacity, the pastoral economy was only able to support the Khitan people at subsistence level. Herding and hunting activities failed to provide them some essential goods, such as cereals and textiles, which could compensate the deficiency of their economic base. In addition, their tribal leaders also needed Chinese luxury items to maintain their internal political stability. Thereby when such a pastoral based economy had developed to considerable level, and when some surplus products of herding and hunting were available, their desire for the agricultural products grew. Thus commodity exchange with sedentary societies by means of either trade, tribute-bestowal and court-to-court intermarriages or even raids (particularly on China), gradually became a significant element in their economic structure. This type of commodity exchange also played a considerable role in the political relationships between the Khitan and their neighbors, particularly China, throughout history.

Since the Khitan as a political force emerged on the historical stage at the end of the 4th Century, their connection with China varied in many ways, in fact based on economic demands, which is often recorded in the Chinese historical data. It indirectly reflected the economic development of the Khitan in different aspects, even though the direct records about the Khitan economy are fairly few.

According to the *Wei Shu*, since the period of Taiping Zhenjun (r. 440-451), the Khitan had presented sturdy horses to the Northern Wei court annually. During the period of emperor Xianzu (r. 466-470), the so-called Khitan eight tribes separately presented sturdy steeds and quality fur to the Northern Wei court. In return, they got permission to trade in the border market between Helong and Miyun, the China's frontier area, in order to obtain the agricultural products their pastoralism-based economy could not provide. Soon after, when they suffered food shortages, emperor Gaozu (r. 470-499) allowed them to cross the border for the purchase of grains. Later, during the reigns of emperors Shizong (r. 500-515) and Suzong (r. 515-528), they constantly sent missions to present specialties, including horses, hunting and gathering products and some other local goods. As a consequence, they got a great number of gifts from the Northern Wei court in

return. These sorts of activities were regularized and became more frequent until the end of the Northern Wei.¹⁰ It indicates that the Khitan's animal husbandry, especially horse breeding, and hunting had been developed into a higher level. They had surplus products to exchange with the Northern Wei for the agricultural products they needed and grains were the principle one among these goods. The other event, which is recorded in the *Wei Shu*, provides a general picture of the economic situation of the Khitan in the second half of the 5th Century. In the third year of Taihe (479), for sake of avoiding an invasion from Korea, Wuyu, a tribal leader, led one of the Khitan tribes with 3,000 carts, over 10,000 tribesmen and numerous animals of different kinds to submit to the Northern Wei in order to seek refuge. The number of carts is somewhat exaggerated, but it is known that a considerable number of carts were used by the Khitan. However it could not be certain that these carts were imported from their neighbors by trade or made by the Khitan themselves. It is more likely that these carts were imported by trade, for no any evidence shows the cart making skill was introduced to the Khitan before the second half of the 8th Century. In addition to their internal development of the economy, connection with China Proper, specifically the frontier trade and tribute-bestowal activities, produced a profound impact upon the Khitan society and economy. Those properties that the Khitan gained through frontier trade and bestowals from the Chinese courts gradually became an indispensable part of their economic life.

"Nomadic peoples and empires were dependent on Chinese material goods"¹¹, whatever this dependency was for the substantial need of common nomadic herdsmen as claimed by Jagchid, or to meet the demand of the nomadic elite as suggested by Barfield.¹² In addition, Di Cosmo also agrees, "the economic revenues from the tribes paid by China ... buttressed the power of the upper echelons of Xiongnu aristocracy",¹³ even though he states that the nomads "could and did survive without China".¹⁴ The pre-dynastic Khitan, as other nomadic peoples did need Chinese products for either economic or political purposes. Therefore, they had constantly obtained Chinese material goods alternatively through peace or military means, since they started to make contacts with China Proper in the 4th Century. In the historical course of the pre-dynastic Khitan, the commodities that the Khitan gained from China had become an important portion of the economic basis, despite some political significance that these Chinese wealth might have had.

¹⁰ *WS* 100. 2223-2224.

¹¹ Wright 1995, p. 296.

¹² *Idem.*

¹³ Di Cosmo 1994, p. 1125.

¹⁴ *Idem.*

3. The period of the Northern Qi. In the fourth year of Tianbao (553), the Khitan invaded the Chinese border area. Emperor Wenxuan (r. 549-559) launched a punitive campaign against them, capturing more than 100,000 people and several hundred thousand animals of different kinds. Later, on being also harassed by the Türks, they temporarily resided with 10,000 families within the territory of the Koguryō (Gaogoulu).¹⁵ The several hundred thousand captured animals of different kinds can be regarded as evidence of the prosperity of the livestock farming of the Khitan.

4. The period of the Sui. During the period of the Sui Dynasty (581-618), the Khitan are portrayed in the *Sui Shu* as "bellicose in plundering and raiding borders" and "the most uncourteous and arrogant among all barbarians"¹⁶ The fact hidden behind the writing is that the Khitan frequently raided borders, invading Chinese territory and looting wealth at the beginning of the Sui. Since the Khitan could not get Chinese products through peaceful means under the Sui aggressive foreign policy, the Khitan had to employ plundering as the major means to accumulate their property, in order not only to compensate for any deficiency of their economic basis and strengthen their economic force, but also to pay for bigger political structure, since they were at the preparation stage for building a tribal confederation. At this stage, they still "moved in search of grass and water" and engaged in animal husbandry as their key livelihood, while hunting was a subsidiary profession they mostly valued.¹⁷

The period of the Dahe Tribal Confederation. During the Sui and Tang period, a new phase of history began when the Khitan social organization developed from tribal units into a tribal confederacy led by the Dahe family. The duration of the Dahe confederation was from the beginning of the 7th Century to the 730s, lasting more than 150 years. The formation of this tribal confederation, to a certain extent, led to the end of the separated situation of the Khitan tribes, reducing their internal conflicts and largely promoting their economic development.

At the beginning of the Tang, owing to the dissolution of the First Turkish Empire, most of the Khitan tribes broke away from the Türks and submitted to the Tang in succession. In the twenty-second year of Zhenguan (648), the subdued Khitan tribes were arranged in the area near the Chinese garrison, Yingzhou. The Government-general of Songmo was set for administration, and ten subordinate prefectures were set in accordance with the original Khitan tribes. As a consequence, the Khitan could get incredible benefits from this so-called "loose rein (*Jimi* in Chinese)" policy, through trade, bestowals and imperial marriages.

¹⁵ *BS* 94. 3128.

¹⁶ *SS* 84. 1881.

¹⁷ *Idem.* p. 1882.

Such kinds of subsidies from the Tang court doubtlessly increased the Khitan's economic strength. The Tang subsidies, therefore, could be regarded as an important part of the Khitan's economic basis in this period of time. The Tang court could also provide political protection for the Khitan, when they were suffering an invasion or attack from the neighboring states or tribes. Under such circumstances, the Khitan had a great opportunity to develop their social economy. Indeed, the Khitan economic power and military force had been strengthened dramatically during this period. This was reflected in the Khitan-Tang conflict at the end of the 7th Century (the Li-Sun rebellion), even though there was almost no concrete source on the Khitan economic situation available. This rebellion broke out in 696. The response from the Tang court was a fierce punitive expedition. The Tang Dynasty, which was in its heyday, still felt it extremely difficult to crush the rebellion. This military conflict had lasted for almost one year and the Tang court finally put down the rebellion with assistance of the Türks and the Xi.¹⁸ It seems that the Khitan military strength could match that of the Tang. In addition, their impressive fighting skills and their aggressive manner in military actions indicates that they possessed considerable economic strength as a powerful backing.

The period of the Yaonian Tribal Confederation. During the period of the Yaonian (the second tribal confederation (730-906)), the Khitan was in a process of transition from a tribal confederation into an imperial state. Their community was undergoing a profound transformation in economy, politics and culture that was to shape their dynastic history for next two hundred years. In this period, their social organization as well as their economic base had developed to a higher level. The unified tribal organization made relatively large-scale production, expansion of pastures and social division of labor possible.

The tribe had become a productive unit as well as a military one. The tribesmen linked with pasture or cultivated land to form a village, which also acted as a military base.¹⁹ This dual organization that combined economic activities and military operations together made their military chief Yilijin also take charge of production management. Due to the changes in the Khitan tribal organization, redistribution of authority might have happened in the ruling class. According to the *Liao Shi*, from the middle of the 8th Century onwards, the Khitan military chiefs showed more concerns for production activities. "The earliest ancestor of the Liao, Nieli, was concerned about affairs of cultivation and handicraft industries, so was emperor Taizu".²⁰ "Yundeshi was the first to teach the people to sow and

¹⁸ Cf. *JTS* 199. 5349-5354; *XTS* 219. 6167-6176.

¹⁹ Hua, Shan & Fei, *Guaoping* 1958, p. 50.

²⁰ *LS* 46. 730.

reap. He was also skilled in stock breeding".²¹ "Saladi was the first to establish iron-smelting. He taught the people to cast iron-implements".²² "Shulan was the first to practice masonry and to build walled cities. He taught the people how to plant mulberry trees and hemp and how to weave".²³ Those persons mentioned above were the Khitan military chiefs, the Yilijins, in different periods. Actually, they were not the technicians to teach the people skills but were the organizers to manage, encourage and supervise the people to engage in production activities. This does not mean that military chiefs were not necessarily responsible for economic affairs before the middle of the 8th Century. It is merely because the Yilijins before Nieli were responsible only for military affairs, in the available historical records.²⁴

On the other hand, in their more and more frequent contacts with the neighboring tribes and states, particularly the interaction with the frontier Chinese people, more advanced foreign production skills, tools and lifestyles were introduced and a considerable amount of foreign products were imported through means of trade or looting by the Khitan. It not only promoted their production, but also consolidated their economic basis, and improved their living standard as well.

1. Animal husbandry. Animal husbandry remained a mainstay in the economic basis of the Khitan, and was continually growing. As recorded in the *Liao Shi*, "Saladi was skilled in stock breeding, the country thereby became rich";²⁵ "when emperor Taizu was the Yilijin of the Dielie Administration ... he benefited his people by pursuing their interests. The herds flourished, and both the government and the people were sufficiently provided for".²⁶ The herds included mainly horses, but there were sheep, cattle and camels as well.²⁷ The tributes they paid to the Tang court usually contained pastoral products as the principle goods.²⁸ The Khitan had intention of expanding their land southward for both political and economic purposes. Up to the end of the Tang Dynasty, their pastoral land had extended to the marginal region of China Proper, the area of Youzhou and Jizhou. Conflicts between the Khitan and Chinese separatist regime in the northeastern frontier were described in the *Xin Tangshu*. See *Materials* {50}. As suggested by the description in the above records, the Khitan seemed eager to expand their

²¹ *Idem* 2. 24.

²² *Idem*.

²³ *Idem*.

²⁴ See *XTS* 219. 6170-6171; *LS* 63. 954-955.

²⁵ *LS* 2. 24.

²⁶ *LS* 60. 931.

²⁷ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, pp. 116-117.

²⁸ See *CFYG* 970-972.11397-11419.

pastoral land. These sorts of conflicts started by the Khitan expansion movement usually happened in autumn. According to the annotation of the *Zizhi Tongjian* made by Hu Sanxing, when autumn occurred, on the steppe the grass had withered; while in the region close to the Chinese borders, the grass was still growing. Taking advantage of this season of difference, the Khitan herdsmen could extend their grazing time to the south.²⁹ This might be the reason why they struggled to seek grassland southward. In addition, their stockbreeding had flourished so much that they could exchange a large number of horses for pastures and for redeeming captives.

2. Agriculture. According to the archaeological findings, agriculture existed in the Shira Muren River basin as early as the remote ancient times. An archaeological excavation in the area several hundred *li* north of the Shira Muren found numerous stone farm tools, including hoes, spades, shovels, plows, hammers and pestles. It was estimated by the archaeologists that these stone implements were at least two thousand five hundred years old.³⁰ A later investigation in Ningcheng County of Inner Mongolia, has shown that the agricultural culture existed south of the Shira Muren River around 1000 B.C.³¹ The Chinese historical records also provide some evidence that in addition to the agrarian Chinese world to the south, some of the Khitan's neighboring ethnic peoples were more or less involved in rough agriculture. The Shiwei people produced millet, wheat and sorghum to the north of the Khitan.³² The Wuji people were using plows to cultivate, producing millet, wheat, sorghum and some vegetables, and breeding pigs to the east of the Khitan.³³ Their western neighbors, the Xi tribes were also practicing cultivation in the Laoha River basin.³⁴ The Khitan even learned the skill of planting watermelon and got the seeds from the semi-agricultural Uighur people.³⁵ In my opinion, there is a strong possibility that those agricultural elements in the surrounding area of the Khitan would inevitably have an influence upon the Khitan society.

The Khitan tribal agriculture first mentioned in the Chinese documents was as early as the end of the Dahe period in the first half of the 8th Century. In an imperial edict from the Tang court to the Khitan rulers Julie and Ketuyu, it is said that if a peaceful bilateral relationship was established, the Khitan people could

²⁹ *ZZTJ* 264. 8623.

³⁰ Inner Mongolia Daily, December 30, 1954.

³¹ *Cf. Cosmo*, 1994, p. 1098.

³² *WS* 100. 2221.

³³ *Idem.* p. 2220.

³⁴ *XTS* 219. 6173.

³⁵ *QDGZ* 25. 238.

plow and sow in the field, and graze herds on fertile and moisture grassland.³⁶ A later edict to the Khitan ruler Nili (identical to Nieli) mentioned that as a result of the Ketuyu's rebellion, "the laborers could not cultivate and the livestock could not breed."³⁷ In the above imperial edicts, "cultivation" and "stock breeding" are mentioned together. This might suggest that some degree of agriculture had already existed among the Khitan tribes before the middle of the 8th Century together with other occupations, even though the proportion of farming in the Khitan economic structure was extremely small and production level was fairly low. Additionally in the later period of their pre-dynastic period, some Khitan leaders encouraged agriculture despite that most of those who engaged in agriculture were the Chinese frontier refugees or other subdued sedentary or semi-sedentary peoples. As recorded in the historical sources, "Nieli was the first to teach his people to cultivate and weave";³⁸ "Jundeshi taught people to till the land, which was suitable for cultivation";³⁹ "after put down the rebellions organized by his brothers and other collateral relatives, emperor Taizu embarked on armistice and tax-reduction, and concentrated on agricultural development".⁴⁰

What is worth mentioning is the situation of the Yila tribe of the Khitan. The Yila was an important tribe, which Abaoji, the founder of the Khitan State, came from. The history and significance of this tribe has been described in 6.6. of Chapter 6. Geographically, the Yila tribe was the closest Khitan tribe to China Proper. Before the time of Abaoji, the people of this tribe had some experience in contact with Chinese culture, and might have been familiar with the agrarian way of life. At the end of the Tang Dynasty and because of the anarchy in China, great numbers of frontier Chinese fled to the Khitan. In addition, there were also considerable numbers of Chinese captives who were taken to the Khitan territory, because of the Khitan's southward expansion. Since the Yila was the nearest tribe to China, most of Chinese refugees and captives arrived at the place of the Yila. Abaoji built Chinese style Han cities for settling them, and encouraged them to cultivate. The Yila, therefore, became the most flourishing tribe of the Khitan in agriculture. It was also because of the flourishing agriculture, the Yila tribe was getting richer, and finally became the most important economic base, upon which Abaoji united other Khitan tribes and founded the Khitan Empire.

On the other hand, the Tang court employed intermarriage alliances, which were initiated in the Han Dynasty, as an important element of its foreign policy. For the leaders of the ethnic groups, intermarriage meant dowries and wedding

³⁶ *QTW* 285.2888.

³⁷ *Idem* 285. 2888-2889.

³⁸ *LS* 48. 822.

³⁹ *Idem* 59. 923.

⁴⁰ *Idem*. 924.

gifts and equally closer relations with agrarian courts, to large extent. For the sake of frontier security along its northeast border, the Tang court had married four imperial princesses to the Khitan rulers, according to the *Xin Tangshu*.⁴¹ It could be reasoned that some agricultural products, farming tools, seeds of grains and even agricultural techniques (which would be contained in the dowries and wedding gifts) might have been taken to the Khitan along with these Chinese princesses. In addition, the envoys of both the Khitan and the Tang and the frontier sedentary peoples could also possibly transfer advanced production technology to the Khitan. Moreover, the frontier trade would be also an important means for the Khitan to import agricultural products, such as farming tools, seeds of grains, and some other goods. These could be regarded as the external dynamics in promoting the agricultural development of the Khitan.

Towards the end of their pre-dynastic period, the Khitan appeared to more and more recognize the significance of agriculture. The reasons are supposed to be concluded as following: Firstly, incorporating agriculture into their economic structure could make the Khitan economic basis become a broader and self-sufficient one. This would lay a strong groundwork for a new and powerful political structure. Secondly, under Chinese cultural influence, the state that the Khitan intended to found would be with some Chinese-styled inclinations. The Confucian ideology emphasized the importance of agriculture and bureaucratic administration. In this sense, agriculture must be a remarkably integral element in their economic basis, particularly at the end of the Khitan's pre-dynastic history and their dynastic period.

In addition, Chinese refugees and captives, and subdued agricultural and semi-agricultural peoples of the Xi and Shiwei added a significant impetus to the agricultural development of the Khitan. Besides Chinese, the Bohai, Xi and Shiwei peoples were all skilled in farming. The majority of these refugees were farmers. The record of the *Xin Wudai Shi* in *Materials* {50(2)} provides us some information on the Chinese refugees and captives, and how they were forced by Abaoji to cultivate. Although these farmers were not ethnic Khitan at all, they had already been incorporated into the political sphere of the Khitan under such circumstances.

Nevertheless, it has to be admitted that during the pre-dynastic period, the general production standard of the Khitan's agriculture, except for the Yila tribe, appeared to be still at a considerably low level, and the farming activities certainly had not become common among the Khitan people. However, although the cultivation activities were conducted almost all by the non-Khitan people, the

⁴¹ *XTS* 219. 6167-6173.

proportion of the agricultural element in the Khitan economic basis was increasing.

3. Handicraft industry. The Khitan handicraft industry also developed to a higher level in the later period of the Tang Dynasty. The professions multiplied, including cloth weaving, cart making, saddlery making, fishing-tackle making, bow and arrow making, hide tanning, ceramic making and so on. Some of them began to separate from animal husbandry, the mainstay of the Khitan economic basis, becoming independent occupations.⁴² The craftsmen, at this stage, included not only the ethnic Khitans who were engaged in those traditional Khitan handicrafts, but also a large number of captured Han Chinese who were forced to work on some traditional Chinese handicrafts, such as silk weaving and so on. Among the above occupations, the most famous one was saddlery making, which was called "the best under heaven".⁴³ As tributes, Khitan saddlery had been presented to the Chinese courts in the time of the Five Dynasties.⁴⁴ Some saddlery was also found in the early Khitan tombs.⁴⁵ As well, the skill of ceramic making tended to be improved during this period, according to archaeological discoveries. In each of the seven early Khitan tombs, which were found in Inner Mongolia and Liaoning in 1980s, some ceramic wares were excavated including ceramic pots, ceramic jars, and ceramic vases. These ceramics are firmly believed to have been made by the Khitan themselves, according to archaeological studies.⁴⁶

Regarding the time when iron smelting, city building, and coin making come into existence among the Khitan tribes, there are two different viewpoints in the academic circles of the Khitan studies. Most of scholars believe that some of the above occupations had emerged in the Khitan society as early as the end of the pre-dynastic period.⁴⁷ The evidence upon which they rely is a piece of record in the *Liao Shi*. See *Materials* {48}. Nevertheless, Zhang Zhengming maintains that iron smelting, city building, and coin making could not exist before the founding of the Khitan state. He argues that the piece of record about the achievements of Abaoji's ancestors are merely some legendary stories that reflect some vague memories of the later generations on the achievements of their ancestors. Some mistakes in the time and the people who made this progress are hard to avoid. He also states that the legends of iron smelting, city building, and coin making in the above record do not tally with the historical facts.⁴⁸

⁴² *Idem.*

⁴³ Chen, Shu 1963, p. 38.

⁴⁴ *WDHY* 29. 456.

⁴⁵ Zhang, Bozhong 1984; repr. Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 2), p. 150.

⁴⁶ *Idem.* pp. 150-151.

⁴⁷ See Yang, Zhijiu 1956; Tuo, Feng 1959; and Sun, Jinji & Bai, Xinhua 1983.

⁴⁸ Zhang, Zhengming 1979, p. 17.

In addition to those traditional Khitan handicrafts, many advanced foreign technical skills were introduced into the Khitan, as a result of communications with the neighboring peoples. For generations, the Khitan had arranged marriage alliances with a neighboring Uighur Xiao clan that possessed a developed tradition of iron smelting.⁴⁹ It inevitably influenced on the Khitan iron smelting industry. Carts began to be in common use by the Khitan people as early as the 5th Century as it is known. However, there is no evidence to prove if the Khitan themselves made these carts or imported them from the outside world. The Khitan's closest neighbors, the Xi people were skilled in making carts. In “‘Xining Shi Qidan Tuchao’ Shuzheng Gao”, it reads,

奚人業伐山,陸種,斫車.契丹之車,皆資於奚.⁵⁰

The Xi people made lumbering, farming and cart-making their occupations. The Khitan's carts were all supplied by the Xi.

It is frequently stated that the Khitan emperors "rode in the Xi made cart" in the *Jiu Wudai Shi*, *Xin Wudai Shi* and *Liao Shi*. This indicates that the considerable amount of carts used by the Khitan people were imported from the Xi. It could also be supposed that the technical skill of cart making was probably introduced into the Khitan from the Xi prior to the founding of the Khitan state. The Khitan people also learned cart-making skill from the Shiwei. The *Liao Shi* records:

黑車子,國也.以善制車帳得名.契丹之先,嘗遣人往學之.⁵¹

Hei Chezi (some tribes of the Shiwei) was the name of a state. The name (which means "black cart) was got for the people who were skilled in making carts and tents. The ancestors of the Khitan had sent people to learn (how to make carts and tents) from them.

The *Qidan Guozhi* suggests furthermore that the Khitan started to learn cart making from the Hei Chezi Shiwei after they broke away from Uighur control in the 840s.⁵²

Some Song envoys observed that the Khitan people were making carts, when they traveled to the Khitan Liao State. As they described it, the Khitan's cart making industry was already on a large scale.⁵³ From this it could be also suggested that the cart making industry might have started among the Khitan people in their pre-dynastic period after the technical skill had been introduced to the Khitan society.

⁴⁹ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p.142.

⁵⁰ Jia, Jingyan 1984, p. 126.

⁵¹ *LS* 116. 1543.

⁵² *QDGZ* 25. 239.

⁵³ *Cf.* Chen, Shu 1963; and Wang, Ling 1983.

4. The human and material resources from the conquered areas. The Chinese refugees and captives, and the other subdued pastoral and semi-agrarian peoples of the Xi, Shiwei, and Bohai were also a significant factor in the economic growth of the Khitan at the end of their pre-dynastic period. At the end of the 9th Century, the Tang Empire was slowly disintegrating. The border areas were suffering anarchy. "This situation left a large group of Chinese border settlers, who were without an effective government, ready to accept protection anywhere if it was offered under not too unfavorable condition."⁵⁴ As recorded in the *Xin Wudai Shi*, for example, "At this time Liu Shouguang was despotic, so that the people of Youzhou and Zhuozhou fled to the Khitan."⁵⁵ This large population of Chinese refugees helped the Khitan to increase production. Among them, the majority were farmers, while others were skilled artisans and even Chinese bureaucratic officials.

Meanwhile the Khitan people were in the process of state building. Plundering not only wealth but also human beings from their neighboring areas seemed to be employed by the Khitan as a significant means of increasing the productivity of their future state. As early as 696, during the Li-Sun rebellion, the Khitan invaded Youzhou, "killed and captured people and officers".⁵⁶ Soon after they seized Jizhou, they "captured several thousand people".⁵⁷ In 788, the Khitan "raided the Zhenwu garrison together with the Xi, capturing a large numbers of human beings and animals."⁵⁸ Towards the end of the Tang Dynasty, the Khitan chiefs already had ambitions to expand their territory and increase their population.⁵⁹ The predatory operations against their neighboring peoples thereby were getting more and more frequent. At this particular stage, their raids and attacks aimed mainly at acquiring additional manpower. As the *Liao Shi* records, "The Xianzhi khaghan (Xi'er, r. 860?-882?) attacked (the Xi), capturing seven hundred households."⁶⁰ Also in the same period, the military chief of the Khitan, Saladi, captured seven thousand households of the Xi.⁶¹ In 901 Abaoji "continuously defeated the Shiwei, Yujue and Xi, and took a large number of captives."⁶² In 902 "(Abaoji) launched an offensive on Hedong (modern Shanxi Province) and Daibei (the area north of modern Dai county of Shanxi Province) ... captured ninety-five thousand

⁵⁴ Wittfogel & Feng, p. 142.

⁵⁵ *XTS* 72. 886.

⁵⁶ *JTS* 199. 5350.

⁵⁷ *Cf. XTS* 219, pp. 6167-6173.

⁵⁸ *JTS* 199. 5353.

⁵⁹ *LS* 2. 24.

⁶⁰ *Idem* 33. 387.

⁶¹ *Idem* 1. 2.

⁶² *Idem*. 1-2.

people and huge numbers of camels, horses, sheep, and cattle."⁶³ In 905 the Khitan attacked Liu Rengong and seized several prefectures and captured all the people.⁶⁴

Among the captives and subdued peoples, there were farmers, herdsmen and artisans as well who played significant roles in promoting the Khitan economy, particularly agriculture and its related handicrafts and trades. The majority of Chinese refugees and captives were farmers who were used as the main human resource to develop an agricultural base for the Khitan. Following the pattern of the Tang prefectures and counties, Abaoji built Chinese cities (*Han Cheng*) to settle them and forced them to cultivate the land. The record of the *Xin Wudai Shi* in *Materials* {50(2)} provides us some information on the Chinese city and how the Chinese refugees and captives were led by Abaoji to cultivate the land. Captured tribesmen were made followers and incorporated into Abaoji's twenty tribes. Most of them were herdsmen, but others were skilled metal workers and artisans. Together with the Chinese artisans, they helped to develop the manufactures of goods for the Khitan. Besides, the plunder of luxury goods from Chinese territories and livestock from both the neighboring tribes and north China also increased their economic strength. These predatory operations undoubtedly played a remarkable role in promoting the economic basis of the Khitan at the end of their pre-dynastic period.

The economic development, particularly during the later period (the period of Yaonian confederation), had enriched the Khitan and increased their military and political powers, laying a fundamental basis for their further expansion into north China, and the founding of an imperial state.

⁶³ *Idem.* 2.

⁶⁴ *Idem.*

CHAPTER 6. THE ETHNIC ENVIRONMENT

6.1. The Khitan and the Tuoba

The Tuoba in its pre-dynastic period. The Tuoba was the most northern branch of the Xianbei. They originally inhabited the region of the Great Xianbei Mountains, which is now the Erguna River valley of the northern section of the Great Xing'an Range. The Japanese specialist Shiratori Kurakichi's textual research in the 1920s proves the Xianbei origin of the Tuoba.¹ This assertion is commonly accepted in the field of the Tuoba studies. The language the Tuoba spoke was "generally connected with Mongolic".²

From the 1st to the 3rd Centuries, the Tuoba tribes had undergone three southward migrations, gradually moving towards the south. The first migration happened in the reign period of emperor Xuandi (a posthumous title given by Tuoba Gui, the founder of the Northern Wei, in the dynastic times) named Tuoba Tuiyin, who was one of the remote ancestors of the Tuoba. Taking advantage of the westward migration of the northern Xiongnu and the internal turmoil of the southern Xiongnu, the Tuoba moved southward, reaching the Lake Daze (modern Lake Hulun). After six generations, in the time of emperor Xiandi (a posthumous title), and for reason of plundering wealth and further expansion, the Tuoba began their second migration. This time they arrived in the old land of the Xiongnu, the area near modern Guyang County of Inner Mongolia under the foot of the Yin Mountains north of the great bend of the Yellow River. After coming into the old land of the Xiongnu, the Tuoba started a process of assimilation with the local Xiongnu people. The *Account of Xu Ji* of the *Wei Shu* records a legendary story that emperor Shengwu, Jiefen met and mated heavenly maiden in the old land of the Xiongnu, and then begot Liwei, emperor Shizu.³ This legend could be regarded a sort of mythicism of the intermarriage between the Tuoba and Xiongnu. According to the previous studies, the term "Tuoba" means "descendants of the Xianbei father and Xiongnu mother" in the languages of the northern peoples.⁴ In the time of Liwei, there were some Xiongnu family names recorded in seventy-five foreign tribes of the Tuoba confederation.⁵ It is because of this, the Chinese scholar Ma Changshou maintains that the Tuoba were of

¹ Shiratori 1933, pp. 124-125.

² Janhunen 1996, p. 190.

³ *WS* 1. 2-3.

⁴ Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p.195.

⁵ *WS* 103. 3007-3011.

mixed Xianbei and Xiongnu origin.⁶ The third wave of migration was in the time of Liwei. After being invaded by the western section of the Xianbei, the Tuoba tribes were dispersed. Then Liwei sought refuge with the chief of the Moluhui tribe, Dou Bin. When Dou Bin lost his horse in the war with the western section of the Xianbei, Liwei gave his own horse to him. As a reward, the tribes under Liwei were allowed to live in Changchuan (modern Xinghe County of Inner Mongolia). After more than a decade of development, Liwei had grown in power and all the old tribesmen came to submit to him.⁷ In 248, Liwei killed Dou Bin's sons and incorporated their tribesmen into his power. Accordingly many other tribes submitted to Liwei. The population of the Tuoba, therefore, had rapidly increased to two hundred thousand. In 258, they again migrated and settled in Shengle (northwest of modern Helinger County of Inner Mongolia).⁸ During their progress southwest, the Tuoba made great efforts to establish peaceful relationships including tribute-bestowal, intermarriage, and trade relations with the Chinese regimes the Wei and Jin. As a result, they gained tens of thousands of golden coins and much silk annually, and also had the chance to learn advanced Chinese culture.⁹

By the time of Luguan (a son of Liwei), their territory extended from Shengle in the west to the north of Shanggu (modern Huailai County of Hebei Province) and the west of Ruyuan (region of the upper course of the Luan River) in the east, neighboring the Yuwen. The population of the Tuoba, at this time, had increased to four hundred thousand. At the same time, the Yuwen, like many other tribes, had been the vassal people of the Tuoba. In 298, when the Yuwen leader Xunniyan came to present tributes, Luguan allowed his eldest daughter to marry him, for keeping such good relationships with them.

In the early 4th Century, the Tuoba embarked upon a great expansion in all directions. In 310, they assisted the Jin to defeat the Bai tribes of the Xianbei and the Tiefu tribes of the Xiongnu. As a reward, they were given five counties north of the Xingling Mountains (modern Juzhu Mountains). This region linked Xihe and Suofang in the west and connected Dai Jun in the east. In 312, a Tuoba army led by Yilu (posthumous title was emperor Mudi, r. 307-316) and his eldest son Liuxiu defeated Liu Cong's son Liu Can of the Xiongnu founded Han State (304-318) in Jinyang. Next year, they took Shengle as the Northern Capital; set the Southern Capital in the old Pingcheng (northeast of modern Datong City of Shanxi Province); and built a new Pingcheng south of the Yu River, to control the southern part where was inhabited mostly by Chinese. During the period from 317

⁶ Ma, Changshou 1962, p. 245.

⁷ *WS* 1. 3.

⁸ *Idem.*

⁹ *Idem.* 4.

to 321, they defeated the invasion of the Tiefu Xiongnu led by Liu Hu, and married a princess to the subdued Liu Hu's cousin, Lugu. Afterward, they "annexed the old land of the Wusun to the west, swallowed up the west of the Wuji",¹⁰ penetrating into the northern steppe.

In 337, Shiyijian (posthumous title was emperor Zhaocheng, r. 321-376) founded the Dai kingdom (337-376), and made Fanchou (southwest of modern Hunyuan County of Shanxi Province) its capital. In the period of the Dai, their territory approximated to the modern middle part of Inner Mongolia and northern part of Shanxi Province. This short-lived kingdom was destroyed by the Di people founded the Qian Qin (the Early Qin 350-394) kingdom led by Fu Jian in 376.

After being defeated by the Murong Xianbei in 344, two the groups of people, the Khitan and the Kumo Xi, who fled to the region of Songmo together, had been in a single tribal complex. Their relations with the pre-dynastic Tuoba tribes are not recorded in the available historical materials. However, since both the Khitan and Tuoba were branches of the Xianbei, they might have had some ethnic relationships with each other. As a conjecture, Janhunnen infers that, "It is possible that the Tabgach language was an early form of Khitanic, perhaps even a language directly ancestral to the Khitan".¹¹ Further research still remains to be done, because of lack of current source material.

The Khitan relations with the dynastic Tuoba. In 386, Shiyijian's grandson and Murong Chui's maternal nephew, Tuoba Gui re-united the Tuoba tribes, taking advantage of the dissolution of the Qian Qin kingdom. Later in the same year, the name of the former Dai kingdom was changed into the Wei (It is also called the Northern Wei, Tuoba Wei, Yuan Wei, and Hou Wei in the Chinese historical documents). In 398, Tuoba Gui declared himself emperor (posthumous title was emperor Daowu, r. 386-409) of the Wei Dynasty, and the capital was moved to Pingcheng (modern Datong City of Shanxi Province).

In the early years of the dynasty, the external situation, which the Tuoba were facing, was quite complicated. In the south, the Muorng Xianbei founded Hou Yan (the Later Yan founded by Murong Chui) and Xi Yan (the Western Yan founded by Murong Yong) were obstacles to their conquest of north China; In the north, the rising Rouran were a formidable threat on the steppe; and in the northeast, the Manchurian barbarians including the Kumo Xi and Khitan were potential problems at the rear. In such a situation, the Tuoba foreign policy was considerable aggressive, based on their steppe background. During the process of their own external expansion, the Kumo Xi tribal complex became their first target. In 388, the Tuoba Wei attacked and severely defeated the Kumo Xi. As a

¹⁰ *Idem.* 9.

¹¹ Janhunnen 1996, p. 191.

result, the Khitan split off from the Kumo Xi and started their independent history. This attack brought about heavy losses to the Kumo Xi, as recorded in the *Wei Shu*¹². However, no the historical sources ever mention the Khitan's losses in this attack. It is likely that the Khitan merely fled away from their old homeland and split from the Kumo Xi, and did not suffer as many losses as the Kumo Xi suffered in the Tuoba attack. This might be one of the reasons why the Khitan could restore their strength quickly, and appear powerful and aggressive in next few decades.

After that, the Northern Wei engaged in conquering north China, launching military attacks on the Rouran who were their formidable enemy on the steppe. The Northern Wei foreign policy initiated by emperor Daowu at this time was firstly to advance south to conquer north China and to conduct campaigns against the Rouran, and then to frighten the northeast barbarians into subservience.¹³ It means that their policy towards Manchuria shifted to a peaceful one. This policy left a political vacuum in Manchuria and favored the Khitan in developing their strength. As recorded in the *Wei Shu* in *Materials* {9}, “After several decades, they multiplied somewhat and spread out”. The other evidence of the Khitan's growth in strength is recorded in the *Zizhi Tongjian*,

燕王熙至陞北。畏契丹之眾，欲還，符后不聽；戊申，遂棄輜重，輕兵襲高句麗。¹⁴

(The Later Yan intended to attack the Khitan.) When the Yan king Xi reached north of the Lengxing Mountains, he would draw back for fear of the Khitan's multitudinous population. Empress Fu did not agree with him. On the day of Wushen, they got rid of their supplies and gear and launched an attack on the Koguryō (Gaogouli).

This story happened in 406, only eighteen years after the Kumo Xi-Khitan complex was disastrously attacked by the Northern Wei. The Khitan's force even was so strong to scare the Later Yan, and made them turn to attack the Koguryō (Gaogouli). It can be seen that the Khitan had already accumulated considerable strength at the beginning of the 5th Century.

On the other hand, once the Khitan were temporarily united and became powerful, they turned aggressive on China Proper. The Khitan's frequent raids and looting was because their own demands of Chinese material goods could not be met, since they were still out of the tributary system of the Northern Wei. In addition, these raiding activities did not incur any punitive attacks from the Northern Wei. All of this indicated that the Tuoba at this time had not the surplus time and energy to engage the control of Manchuria.

¹² *WS* 100. 2222.

¹³ *Idem.*

¹⁴ *ZZTJ* 114. 3588.

At the beginning of the 5th Century, the Northern Wei defeated both the Hou Yan and Xi Yan, occupying almost all the territory of north China. Contemporaneously, the Northern Wei mounted a series of campaigns against the Rouran until the Rouran were utterly defeated in 429 and deported to the frontier. They then successively destroyed their other rivals the Bei Yan (the Northern Yan founded by Feng Ba) in the east, the Xia Kingdom (founded by Tiefu Xiongnu) and Bei Liang (the Northern Liang founded by Lü Guang, a former Chinese governor) in the west, thus unifying all of north China until 439.

After north China was united, the Northern Wei concentrated even more energy on conducting their internal political and economic reforms, a process of sinification, which started as soon as the Northern Wei Dynasty was established. Their foreign policy turned more conservative and defensive compared with what they had practiced before. To keep the northeastern frontier stable and peaceful would have been an important part of the framework of their foreign policy in this period. Therefore, a policy of appeasement toward the Khitan was carried out by the Northern Wei in the rest years of their dynastic period. The Tuoba foreign policy was reflected in the words of emperor Daowu, after mobilizing severe campaign against the Kumo Xi-Khitan tribal complex:

此群狄諸種不識德義，互相侵盜，有犯王略，故往征之。且鼠竊狗盜，何足為患。今中州大亂，吾先平之，然後張其威懷，則無所不服矣。¹⁵

Such a complex of barbarians of different origins do not understand virtue and righteousness, they attacked and invaded each other. They violated the kingly rules. For this reason, I launched a punitive expedition against them. However, such (peoples), who make only small problems, are not worth to be worried. Nowadays the Central Plain was in anarchy, I must conquer it first, so that our might and moral virtues will widely spread. Thereafter, all the barbarians will submit to us.

Additionally, the strong and united Northern Wei made it possible to restore the tributary system, which was initiated in the Han Dynasty to bring the barbarians under Chinese control in Chinese traditional ideological concern. And as a result, the relationship between the Khitan and Northern Wei remained smooth. The Khitan paid tributes and got subsidies in return continuously until the Northern Qi (550-577) took the place of the Northern Wei.¹⁶

Under such a relationship, the Khitan not only gained bestowals from the Northern Wei court and trade benefits from the frontier market to finance their tribal economy, but also they could get Northern Wei protection when they were suffering from foreign invasion or a natural calamity. In 479, the Koguryō schemed together with the Rouran to capture and carve up the land of the Didouyu, the northern neighbor of the Khitan. In fear of their invasion, the Khitan

¹⁵ *WS* 100. 2222.

¹⁶ *Idem*. 2223.

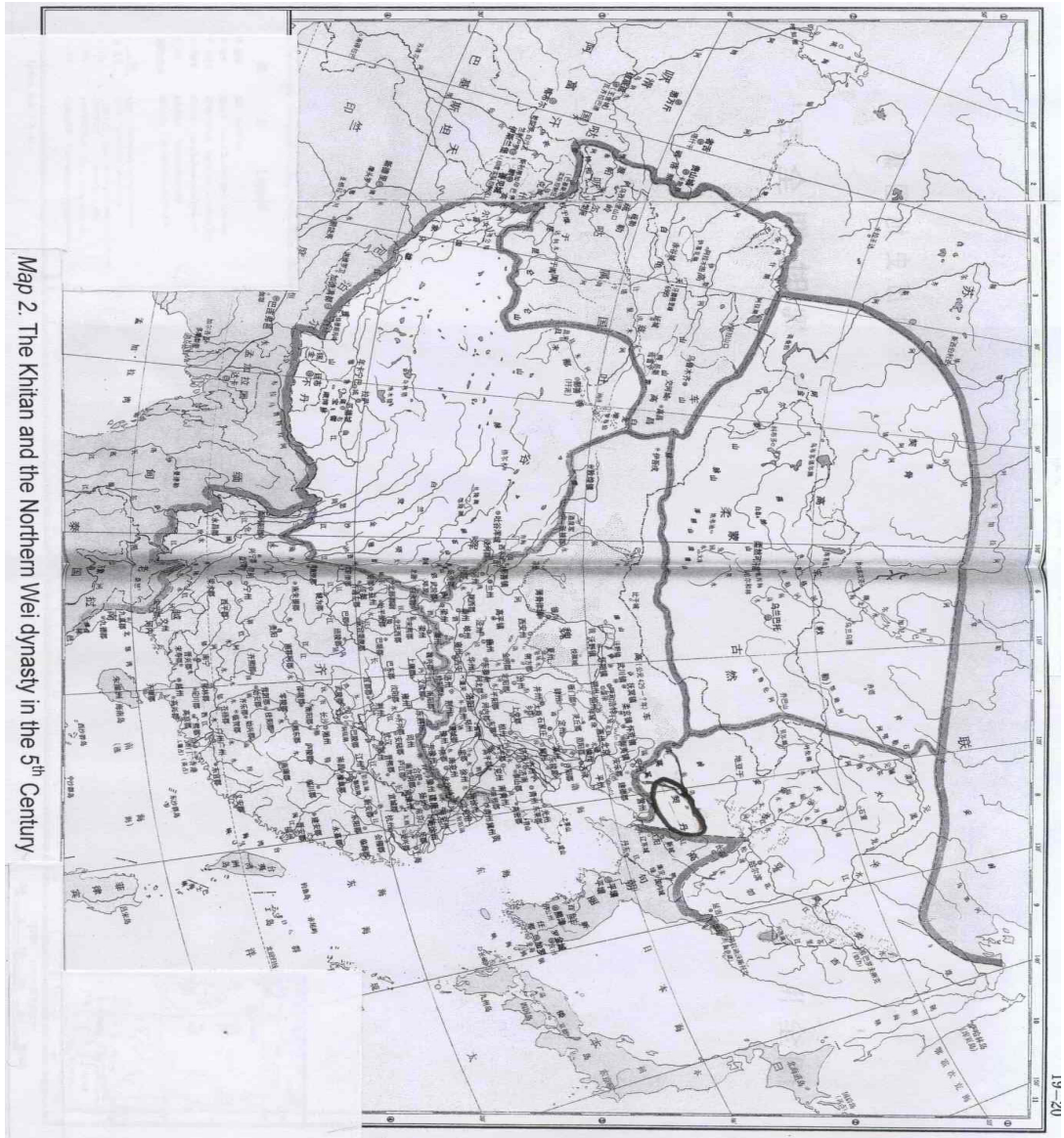
chieftain Wuyu led his tribe with three thousand carriages, over ten thousand tribesmen, and numerous livestock to ask to surrender themselves to the Northern Wei. Their demands were accepted by the Northern Wei court. This Khitan tribe then was settled in the east of the Bailang River (modern Daling River), which was within the territory of the Northern Wei. In the time of emperor Gaozu (r. 470-499), when the Khitan were suffering from a starvation, they were allowed to go across the border to buy grain.¹⁷

In addition to the restoration of the tributary system, Yingzhou was set by the Northern Wei in 436 as a garrison post and changed in 455 into a prefecture, with its administrative seat located in Helong City, geographically as a communications hub to connect China and the Manchurian tribes; and strategically for the defence of the northeastern frontier and to take charge of the affairs of the Manchurian barbarians. It was the first time the frontier defense administration had been set up in the northeast border of China Proper. Yingzhou was continuously used as a strategic pass in the Sui and Tang dynasties to control the northeast barbarians, particularly the Xi and Khitan after they became the major tribal powers in Manchuria.

Throughout their whole dynastic period, the Northern Wei tried every means to keep the northeastern frontier peaceful, including keeping smooth relationships with both the Koguryŏ and the Paekche (*Baiji*), which were located in the Korean peninsula. With the exception of attacking the Kumo Xi-Khitan complex at the beginning of the dynasty and some defensive strikes against the Didouyu and Kumo Xi on a couple of occasions, almost no military conflict had taken place between the Northern Wei and any of Manchurian tribes. The basic policy of the Northern Wei, in the first half of their dynastic period, was concentrating all their energy upon aggressively attacking the Rouran until they no longer posted a threat and eliminating those separatist regimes in north China, in order to accomplish their great undertaking of unification. In the second half of their dynastic period, the Northern Wei policy turned to a conservative one, being engaged in their state building and internal reforms except for occasionally conducting counterattacks against the Rouran's border raids. However, both the different policies the Northern Wei carried out in their dynastic period required a stable and peaceful northeastern frontier to prevent fear of disturbance in the rear. To keep the northeastern frontier stable and peaceful could also be regarded as an important aspect in the Northern Wei foreign policy. On the other hand, the appeasement policy towards the northeast could also make use of the northeast barbarians to contain the strength of the Rouran, in order to reduce the pressure from the north.

¹⁷ *Idem.* 2223-2224

Nevertheless, the objective effect of the Northern Wei foreign policy provided a rare chance for the Khitan to increase their strength.



6.2. The Khitan and the Kumo Xi

The origin of the Kumo Xi. The Chinese historical sources first mention the name Kumo Xi in 388.¹⁸ However, the appearance of the name could have been nearly half a century earlier, after the Yuwen tribal complex was defeated by the Murong in 344.¹⁹ Since the beginning of the Sui Dynasty, this ethnic people had been simply called the Xi.

Concerning the origin of the Kumo Xi, the Chinese historical sources show many different records, which could be generally classified into two categories: one is the Donghu or the Yuwen origin; the other is the Xiongnu origin. The theory of the Donghu or the Yuwen origin is stated by following the Chinese historical materials.

The *Wei Shu* records:

東部宇文之別種。²⁰

The ancestors of the Kumo Xi were a collateral branch of the eastern section of the Yuwen .

The *Sui Shu* records:

奚本曰庫莫奚, 東部胡之種。²¹

The Xi was originally called the Kumo Xi. They were of Donghu origin.

The *Bei Shi* states:

奚本曰庫莫奚, 其先東部胡宇文之別種。²²

The Xi was originally called the Kumo Xi. Their ancestors were a collateral branch of the eastern section of the Hu (the barbarian), the Yuwen".

In the *Tong Dian*, it is recorded:

其先, 東部鮮卑宇文之別種。²³

The ancestors of the Xi were a collateral branch of the eastern section of the Xianbei, the Yuwen".

The *Xin Tangshu* has more detailed description:

¹⁸ *Idem* 100. 2222.

¹⁹ *LS* 63. 951.

²⁰ *WS* 100. 2222.

²¹ *SS* 84.1881.

²² *BS* 94. 3126.

²³ *TD* 200. 5484.

奚亦東胡種, 為匈奴所破, 保烏丸山. 漢曹操斬其帥蹋頓蓋其後也.²⁴

The Xi were also of Donghu (the eastern barbarians) origin. They were defeated by the Xiongnu, and then sought refuge in the Wuwan Mountains. In the Han Dynasty, Cao Cao killed their leader Tadun. (The Xi) were probably the descendants of this people.

Besides, the *Qidan Guozhi* follows the statement of the *Bei Shi*²⁵, while the *Cefu Yuangui* has the same claim as in the *Sui Shu*²⁶. The Xiongnu origin is held by the *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Wudai Shi* and *Wudai Huiyao*. It is recorded similarly as in the *Jiu Tangshu*, it reads:

奚國, 蓋匈奴之別種也²⁷.

The Xi State probably originated from a collateral branch of the Xiongnu.

Actually, the above two different categories have no essential distinction. Since the Yuwen originated from the Xiongnu²⁸, some of the scholars believe that the Yuwen were the predecessors of the Xi and trace the Xi's origin back to the Yuwen's ancestors, the Xiongnu. The above-mentioned Chinese historical sources, except for the *Xin Tangshu*, describe the origin of the Kumo Xi (or Xi) as a collateral branch of a certain ethnic people, but fail to provide more information about this "collateral branch". Only in the *Xin Tangshu*, detailed information about the origin of the Xi is provided. It is clearly maintained that the Xi were the descendants of the Wuhuan.

At the end of the Qin and the beginning of the Han, the Donghu were destroyed by the Xiongnu, and then split into the Xianbei and the Wuhuan. It was the Wuhuan who sought refuge in the Wuhuan Mountains. According to the *Sanguo Zhi* and *Tong Dian*, in the Chuping (190-193) period, the Wuhuan leader Qiuliju died and his nephew Tadun succeeded his position, taking control of the Wuhuan who were living in Liaoxi, Liaodong and You Beiping.²⁹ In 206, the Wuhuan were defeated by Cao Cao, and Tadun was killed. The Wuhuan fell into decline afterward. With the exception of those who were moved to the inside of the Han territory, the other Wuhuan people who remained living in their original land, submitted respectively to the Murong, Duan and Yuwen³⁰. In the above record, the *Xin Tangshu* clearly claims the Kumo Xi were the descendants of Tadun, therefore, I presume that the Kumo Xi or at least part of the Kumo Xi were

²⁴ *XTS* 219. 6173.

²⁵ *QDGZ* 22. 216.

²⁶ *CFYG* 956. 11254.

²⁷ *JTS* 199, p. 5354.

²⁸ *Cf. WS* 103. 2304.

²⁹ *SGZ* 30. 834; *TD* 196. 5367.

³⁰ *Cf. WS* 103. 2304-2306; *JSU* 110. 331-332 & 124. 363.

probably the descendants of the Wuhuan who submitted to, and were under Yuwen control, even though the evidence I can provide is limited. Since both the Wuhuan and Xianbei were of Donghu origin, sharing the same language,³¹ it is not surprising that the Khitan and Kumo Xi spoke the same language.³²

One consensus that has been reached by modern scholars is that the Xi were descendants of the Donghu.³³ However, in regard to which subordinate branch of the Donghu the Xi were derived from, most of the scholars accept the theory of the Yuwen origin.³⁴ I would contend that this kind of theory needs to be reconsidered, since the holders fail to notice that almost all historical sources record that the origin of the Xi were the collateral branch of the Donghu or the Yuwen, but not the exactly the direct descendants of the Yuwen, and ignore the detailed information provided in the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Xin Tangshu*. Therefore, in my opinion, the record in the *Xin Tangshu* that the Xi were the descendants of the Wuhuan is the most convincing explanation in regard to the origin of the Xi.

The Ethnic Relation between the Khitan and the Kumo Xi has been discussed in 3.4. of Chapter 3

The Khitan relations with the Xi before 388. The early history of the relationship between the Khitan and Kumo Xi is not well documented. However, with the help of the available materials, it is possible to form an opinion by gathering up some scattered threads.

The *Description of the Khitan* and *Description of the Kumo Xi* of the *Wei Shu* show that the Khitan and Xi originally belonged to a single tribal complex, before destroyed by the Murong, see *Materials* {6(3)}. The *Liao Shi* also records:

既而慕容燕破之，析其部曰宇文，曰庫莫奚，曰契丹。³⁵

Later, (they) were destroyed by the Murong Yan, and split up into the Yuwen, the Kumo Xi, and the Khitan.

Although the above record contains some wrong information³⁶, it is convincing that the Khitan and Xi were derived from a single tribal complex. According to the *Biography of Yuwen Mohuai of the Xiongnu* in the *Wei Shu*, this single tribal complex should be the Yuwen, the eastern section of the Xianbei, it reads:

³¹ Cf. HHS 90. 2979-2994.

³² WS 100. 2221.

³³ See Wang, Ling 1983; Yang, Ruowei 1983; Feng Jiqin 1984; and Li, Futong 1966.

³⁴ Feng, Jiqin 1984; and Li, Futong 1966.

³⁵ LS 63. 949.

³⁶ See Chapter 3.

建國八年，晁伐逸豆歸，逸豆歸拒之，為晁所敗，殺其驍將涉亦干。逸豆歸遠遁漠北，遂奔高麗。晁徙其部眾五千餘落於昌黎，自此散滅矣。³⁷

In the eighth year of Jianguo (344), when (Murong) Huang attacked Yidou Gui, Yidou Gui resisted, and then was defeated by (Murong) Huang, and his valiant general Sheyi Gan was killed. Yidou Gui fled far to the North Desert, and they sought refuge in the Gaoli (Koryō). (Murong) Huang moved over five thousand Yuwen remnant households to Changli (the capital of the Murong Yan). From then on, (the Yuwen) disintegrated.

This campaign mounted by Murong Huang in the above record is the same as recorded in the *Wei Shu* that had forced the Khitan and Kumo Xi to flee to the region of Songmo. Yidou Gui was a Yuwen leader. Thus it can be seen that the Khitan and Kumo Xi were derived from the Yuwen. In the foregoing discussions, it has been demonstrated that the Khitan and Kumo Xi were not the direct descendants of the Yuwen, and they did not have the same origin.³⁸ Therefore, before the Yuwen were destroyed by the Murong in 344, the Khitan and Kumo Xi were subordinate tribes under Yuwen control, and both of them belonged to the Yuwen tribal complex. In addition, because they were not independent peoples at all, it is supposed that both of them had not had their own tribal names yet until then.

After the Yuwen were destroyed by the Murong, the Yuwen tribal complex, which contained different ethnic tribes of at least the Yuwen, Khitan and Kumo Xi, disintegrated. The Khitan and Kumo Xi as a part of the remnant tribes of the Yuwen fled together to the region of Songmo. From then on, the Khitan and Kumo Xi became a single tribal complex, until they split up in 388. In the *Description of the Kumo Xi* of the *Wei Shu*, a speech delivered by emperor Taizu after defeated the Kumo Xi is cited, it reads:

帝曰："此群狄諸種不識德義，互相侵盜，有犯王略，故而征之..."³⁹

The emperor said, "Such a complex of barbarians of different origins do not understand virtue and righteousness, they attacked and invaded each other. They violated the kingly rules. For this reason, I launched a punitive expedition against them ... "

In the above record, "such a complex of barbarians of different origins" obviously indicates that the Kumo Xi were not of a single origin, but a tribal complex containing two or more peoples of different origins. It can be assumed that the Khitan as some subordinate tribes existed in the Kumo Xi tribal complex, for they were relatively weak while the Kumo Xi were comparatively strong at that time. Therefore it could be inferred that the Kumo Xi might have been the name of a tribal complex, which included at least the Kumo Xi and Khitan tribes before 388.

³⁷ *WS* 103. 2305.

³⁸ See Chapter 3.

³⁹ *WS* 100. 2222.

Moreover, from the above record, it can also be seen that the relationship between the Khitan and Kumo Xi did not seem very peaceful. Attacks and invasions against each other often occurred between these two peoples. This kind of a relationship between the Khitan and Kumo Xi was maintained for forty-four years until the Kumo Xi tribal complex was disastrously attacked by the Northern Wei in 388.

In the third year of Dengguo (388) and for the purpose of northward expansion, the newly established Northern Wei led by emperor Taizu launched an expeditionary campaign against the Kumo Xi tribal complex. In the south of the Ruoluo Shui River (also called the Raole Shui in the other Chinese historical sources. It is the modern Shira Muren River), the Kumo Xi tribal complex was severely defeated, and four tribes and more than one hundred thousand animals (horses, cattle, sheep and pigs) were captured by the Northern Wei.⁴⁰ In the *Wei Shu*, it is recorded that the Khitan were also attacked by the Northern Wei troops in the time of Dengguo. The most important result of this campaign is that the Kumo Xi tribal complex split up, and the Khitan and Kumo Xi respectively became independent peoples. Geographically the Khitan were situated east of the Kumo Xi.⁴¹

Information about the Khitan relations with the Kumo Xi from 388 to the end of the Northern Qi (550-577) cannot be found in the Chinese historical sources. It is only known that both of them submitted to the Tuoba founded Northern Wei Dynasty and established tributary relationships respectively with the Northern Wei court.⁴² In the middle of the 6th Century, when the Northern Wei was in a divided situation and while the Türks were rising in the north and expanding their sphere of influence to Manchuria, that both the Khitan and Kumo Xi turned to submit to the Türks with other Manchurian peoples.

The Xi's political position and relations with the Khitan in the Sui/Tang period. Although both the Khitan and Kumo Xi became independent peoples after 388, they still adjoined each other and were closely related, for they both shared a similar cultural background and had been in the same tribal complex for ages. In the historical sources of the Tang Dynasty, the Khitan and Xi were often called in a combined term "*liangfan* (two barbarians)".⁴³ Throughout the course of the Sui/Tang period, the relationship between them could be simply described as a pattern where they sometimes depended on and allied with each other to resist common enemies, while sometimes they attacked and invaded each other for their

⁴⁰ *Idem.*

⁴¹ *WS* 100. 2223.

⁴² *Idem.* pp.2222-2223.

⁴³ See *JTS* 194. 5174 & 199. 5356.

own interests. Since they both were relatively weak compared to their far more powerful neighbors (Chinese successive regimes to the south, and the Türks or Uighurs to the northwest in this period), the relationship between them was inevitably affected by the rise and fall of those stronger powers, as well as the ever-changing balance of power between them.

The *Description of the Xi* of the *Sui Shu* records:

每與契丹相攻擊, 虜獲財畜, 因而得賞.⁴⁴

Every time when (the Xi) fought with the Khitan, they captured plunders of wealth and livestock. Because of this, they were rewarded.

This record indicates that such a predatory conflict frequently happened between the two peoples at the beginning of the Sui period.

In pace with the establishment of the Sui and the expansion of its influence, the Khitan and Xi gradually broke away Turkish control and shifted their allegiance to the Sui court, for the Sui was more wealthy, powerful and stable compared to the Türks.

After the collapse of the Sui, China Proper fell into anarchy. The Türks took this opportunity to develop their power, and brought the Khitan and Xi again under their control until the reign of emperor Gaozu of the Tang (618-626). Nevertheless, the situation changed in the reign of the emperor Taizong (r. 627-649). Because of a rebellion staged by the subject tribes in 627, constant internal crises, and severe attacks by the Tang in 629, the First Turkish Empire finally collapsed in 630. The Khitan and Xi were freed from the control of the Türks together with other former Turkish subject tribes, and submitted to the Tang. In 628, the Khitan tribes led by their supreme chieftain Mohui surrendered to the Tang.⁴⁵ Two years later, persuaded by the Khitan chieftain Tanmozhe, the Xi submitted to the Tang together with the Bai Xi and Shiwei tribes in 630.⁴⁶ When emperor Taizong made an expeditionary campaign upon Korea in 644, the Khitan and Xi tribes became a part of the Tang army under the command of Zhang Jian, the Governor-general of Yingzhou. In 648, the Tang rose to the peak of its control over southern Manchuria. The Khitan tribes led by Kuge and the Xi tribes led by Keduzhe declared themselves Chinese vassals.

However, in the 680s, the revival of the eastern Türks challenged the Tang supremacy in northeastern Asia. Such a change in the political situation caused a considerable compact on international relations between the regimes in China, in the southern Manchuria and on the steppe. As a result, the relations between the

⁴⁴ *SS* 84. 1881.

⁴⁵ *JTS* 199. 5350.

⁴⁶ *ZZTJ* 193. 6082.

Khitan and Xi were inevitably manipulated by the fluctuation of the balance of power between the Tang and Türks. Under the pressure of the increasingly powerful Türks, the Khitan together with the Xi rebelled against the Tang and submitted to the Türks as early as the 650s. The situation deteriorated in the following years. In 679, at the instigation of the Türks, the Khitan and Xi together raided Yingzhou. Yet the indirect Chinese control over the Khitan and Xi still remained in name until 695. Finally in 696, by their mistreatment at the hands of an arrogant Chinese local official, the Khitan led by Li Jinzhong and his brother-in-law Sun Wanrong launched a large-scale rebellion against the Tang. The Xi defected from the Tang to their erstwhile overlords, the Türks. In the course of this rebellion, the relationship between the Khitan and Xi showed fairly subtle. The attitude of the Xi towards the Khitan wavered. Initially, the Xi joined the Khitan in the rebellion. However, when the Khitan were facing difficulties in confronting a two hundred thousand strong Tang army, the Türks took advantage of this to attack the Khitan in their homeland and captured many of their family members and wealth, which had been gained from the invasion of Chinese cities and defeating the Tang armies. At the same time, the Xi suddenly changed sides, deserting the Khitan and assisting the Tang army to attack the Khitan at the rear.⁴⁷ Both the sneak attack of the Türks and the defection of the Xi were a fatal blow to the Khitan, directly or indirectly assisting the Tang armies to crush the Khitan rebellion. After the rebellion collapsed, the remnant Khitan tribesmen gave their allegiance to the Türks along with the Xi and Bai Xi.⁴⁸

It was not until 714, after the decline of the Turkish power and the resurgence of the Tang expansionism under emperor Xuanzong (r. 712-755), that the Khitan led by Li Jinzhong's cousin Li Shihuo again submitted to the Tang. Two years later in 716, the Xi led by Li Dapu also surrendered to the Tang. Both the Government-general of Songmo and Government-general of Raole were reset, and Li Shihuo and Li Dapu were appointed the Governor-generals of Songmo and Governor-generals of Raole respectively. In addition, imperial marriages, for the first time, were bestowed to the supreme chieftains of the Khitan and Xi. From then on, the Khitan and Xi were under the Tang influence together for a few years. In 720, the Khitan and Xi were dispatched by a Tang chief commander to assist in attacking the Türks.⁴⁹

However, the Tang's control over the Khitan and Xi proved short-lived. An internal dissension between the Khitan king Li Suogu and military chief Ketuyu started in 720. The Tang court interfered by sending an army allied with the Xi to wage a punitive campaign against Ketuyu, but it failed. The Xi leader Li Dapu

⁴⁷ *Idem* 206. 6521.

⁴⁸ *Idem*. 6522.

⁴⁹ *Idem* 212. 6742.

and a Tang chief general were killed by Ketuyu. When Ketuyu attended the Tang court in 727, he was treated rudely by the chief minister Li Yuanhong. As a result, in 730 he rebelled against the Tang, killed the Khitan king Shaogu, and forced the Khitan and Xi to surrender to the Türks. The Tang response was to launch a punitive expedition against the Khitan. Under the pressure from both the Tang and Khitan, the Xi wavered between the two sides. When the Khitan were severely defeated by the Tang troops, the Xi defected to the Tang. However in next year, when Ketuyu raided the Tang border and was attacked by the Tang troops, the Xi who were included in the Tang troops deserted from the battlefield, for fear of Ketuyu who had allied with the Türks. This allowed the Khitan to be finally out of danger. Soon after, the Khitan allied with the Xi and rebelled against the Tang again. But they were crushed by the Tang. In 745, both the Khitan and Xi surrendered to the Tang, and their supreme chieftains Li Huaixiu and Li Yanchong were appointed the Governor-general of Songmo and Governor-general of Raole and bestowed imperial marriages respectively.

Nevertheless, in the middle of the 8th Century, the Tang effort to restore relations with the Khitan and Xi was destroyed by An Lushan, the Tang military governor of Fanyang (modern Beijing), who took charge of controlling the affairs of the Khitan and Xi. In order to curry favor with emperor Xuanzong, An Lushan attempted to subjugate the Khitan and Xi. The Khitan and Xi were infuriated, and murdered the royal brides and rebelled again together. Yet under the pressure of An Lushan, the Xi had to assist An Lushan to attack the Khitan on one occasion, but soon after they stood by the side of the Khitan.

In 755, An Lushan rebelled against the Tang. This protracted rebellion threw the Tang into disorder for a decade and brought it to the verge of destruction. From then on, the Khitan changed their policy into a conservative one. They remained peaceful and submitted to the Uighurs, who had succeeded the Türks to be the lords of the steppe, until the Uighur Empire collapsed in 840. During this period the Xi, however, stayed relatively aggressive, although they also pledged their allegiance to the Uighurs together with the Khitan. They raided the Tang borders many times and were frequently attacked by the Tang troops in return. This conduct could be probably regarded as one of attempts of the Xi to create an autonomous political power. However, since their internal conditions both in economy and social organization had not yet developed maturely enough, and the external enemies that always obstructed them from further development still kept powerful, the Xi failed finally. The relationship between the Khitan and Xi were rarely recorded in the historical sources. One thing can be known is that the Xi had been more powerful than the Khitan and brought the Khitan under their control for a time.⁵⁰ After recording an event that Li Guozhe was killed in the

⁵⁰ See Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 93-141, for more details.

twenty-third year of Kaiyuan (735), the *Liao Shi* states that the Khitan were on the decline from then on, and the Dahe lineage became vassals of the Xi. See *Materials* {43(14)}.

However, it was in this period, after preventing themselves from becoming involved in any conflicts with the neighboring states and tribes, that the Khitan concentrated upon their internal development. Up to the 880s, they had accumulated considerable strength both in socio-economy and in military. While the Xi had consumed almost all their strength in raiding borders and fighting with their neighboring regimes, they had failed to develop their internal social organization and economic basis. As a result of this, after the 860s, the positions of the Khitan and Xi rapidly changed. As recorded in the *Xin Tangshu*, it reads:

咸通九年，其王突董蘇使大都督薩葛入朝。是後，契丹方強，奚不敢抗，而舉部役屬。⁵¹

In the ninth year of Xiantong (868), (the Xi) king Tudongsu sent the Great Governor-general Sage to present in the (Tang) court. From then on, the Khitan were getting stronger. The Xi did not dare to resist them, and then all the (Xi) tribes were enslaved by (the Khitan).

As early as the time of Xianzhi khaghan (named Xi'er, or Xi'erzhi) (r. 860?-882?), the Khitan started their early period of expansionism with wide-ranging conquests on the steppe and in Manchuria. Their military efforts were first directed against their closest neighbors, the Xi as well as the Shiwei and Bai Xi. In the period of Xianzhi khaghan, the Khitan launched twice expeditionary campaigns against the Xi, and captured many Xi people. In one such campaign, the Xianzhi khaghan captured seven hundred Xi households who were later set as the Dieladieda tribe in the time of Taizu (named Abaoji, the founder of the Khitan State, r. 907-928). After recording this event, the *Liao Shi* states, "From then on, the Xi power fell into decline".⁵² In the other campaign, Saladi (Abaoji's father), the military chief of the Khitan, captured seven thousand Xi households and moved them to Qinghe in the region of Raole (west of modern Ningcheng County of Liaoning Province). Later in 903, these seven thousand captured Xi households were set as the Xi Diela tribe, which was included in the twenty tribes of Taizu.⁵³ Following this, in the years of Guangqi (885-888), the Khitan again attacked the Xi and Shiwei, and conquered these smaller tribes.⁵⁴ Up to the beginning of the 10th Century, when Abaoji became the Yilijin of the Yila tribe (the leading tribe of the Khitan), the conquest over the Xi was getting more intensified. In 901, Abaoji repeatedly

⁵¹ *XTS* 219. 6175.

⁵² *LS* 33. 385.

⁵³ *Idem* 1. 2.

⁵⁴ *Idem* 63. 956.

defeated the Shiwei, Yujue and the Xi commander Xialage, and captured many people. In the second month of 906, the Khitan attacked the Shanbei Xi, and defeated them. In the eleventh month of the same year, the Khitan again attacked the Xi and Bai Xi tribes and forced all of them to surrender.⁵⁵ Since they were badly treated by their Khitan overlords, the subdued Xi people frequently revolted against the Khitan. As a result, a part of the Xi tribes, led by the Xi king Quzhu, migrated westward to Guizhou (modern Huailai County of Hebei Province). The Xi then split up into two parts, the Eastern Xi and Western Xi.⁵⁶ In 911, Abaoji again personally commanded the Khitan troops to make a punitive expedition against the Xi, first the Western Xi and then the Eastern Xi, conquered the both finally. Until then, the Xi tribes were entirely subdued and were incorporated into the newly established Khitan Empire, and had become subject tribes under the domination of the Liao, and then had started the process of assimilation with the Khitan and other ethnic peoples. In the dynastic period of the Khitan, the Xi maintained intermarriage relations with the Khitan. For instance, in the Inscription on Memorial Tablet of Yelü Zhixian, it is recorded that the eldest sister of Yelü Zhixian married to Dingguang Nu who belonged to the Camp of the Xi king.⁵⁷ The Japanese scholar Otagi Matuo further claims that not only the members of the lineage of the Xi King, but also the tribesmen who belonged to the five or six Xi tribes, had right to marry with the Liao imperial lineage, Yelü.⁵⁸ After the collapse of the Jurchen founded Jin Dynasty in 1234, the Xi as an ethnic people disappeared from the Chinese historical sources.

6.3. The Khitan and the Shiwei

The Shiwei tribes and their locations. The Shiwei 失韋 and Wuluohou are known as the Shiwei tribes in the period of the Northern Wei Dynasty, but are separately recorded in the *Wei Shu*. In describing the geographic location of the Shiwei 失韋, the *Wei Shu* records:

... 有大水從北而來, 廣四里餘, 名□水.⁵⁹

... There was a great river flowed down from the north. It was more than four *li* (two kilometers) wide. It was call the Na River.

⁵⁵ *Idem* 1. 2.

⁵⁶ *XWDS* 74. 909.

⁵⁷ The Memorial Table Inscriptions of Yelü Zhixian enclosed in Zhao, Zhiwei & Bao, Ruijun 2001. p. 41.

⁵⁸ Otagi 1988, p. 11.

⁵⁹ *WS* 100. 2221.

According to Fang Zhuangyou, the Na River is the modern Nenjiang River.⁶⁰ The location of the Shiwei 失韋 could be roughly delimited as in the middle section of the Nenjiang River north of Qiqihar City. This is because the section of the Nenjiang River near Qiqihar can be two kilometers wide in summer. Sun Xiuren *et al.* synthesize the records in dynastic histories, and declare that the location of the Wuluohou might have been in the east of modern Nongnai Miao, south of the Guiliu River, west of Ulanhot City, and north of the Huolin River and Mount Laotou.⁶¹

During the period from the Northern Qi to the Sui Dynasties, there were five big sections of the Shiwei, they were the Nan Shiwei, Bei Shiwei, Da Shiwei, Bo Shiwei and Shenmoda Shiwei.⁶² The location of the Nan Shiwei was roughly the same as that of the Wuluohou in the Northern Wei period, and the location of the Bei Shiwei was roughly the same as that of the Shiwei 失韋 in the Northern Wei period. As for the location of the Da Shiwei, the *Jiu Tangshu* records:

其北大山之北有大室韋部落，其部落傍望建河居。其河源出突厥東北界俱輪泊，屈曲東流，... 東流注入海。⁶³

To the north, there was the Da Shiwei tribe north of the Dashan Mountains. The tribe lived along the Wangjian River. The source of this river came out of the Lake Julun in the northeast boundary of the Türks, flowing eastward to the sea.

There is similar record in the *Xin Tangshu*. According to the above description, the Mountains can be identical to the modern Great Khingan Range Mountains; and the Wangjian River can be identified with the modern Erguna River.⁶⁴ The Lake Julun, from which the source of the Wangjian River came, therefore, can be the modern Lake Hulun. The location of the Da Shiwei, therefore, was probably in the Erguna River Basin north of the Great Khingan Range. According to Wu Tingxie's study, the Hubu Mountain that the Bo Shiwei lived beside, as recorded in the *Sui Shu*,⁶⁵ is identified with the modern Yilehuli Mountain.⁶⁶ Thus the location of the Bo Shiwei can be roughly identified as north of the Yilehuli Mountain in the upper reaches of the Nenjiang River. Some scholars believed that the Shenmoda River, from which the Shenmoda Shiwei got their name, is one of the sources of the modern Nuomin River⁶⁷. The location of the Shenmoda Shiwei

⁶⁰ Fang, Zhuangyou 1931, pp. 6-7.

⁶¹ Sun, Xiuren *et al.* 1985, p. 18.

⁶² See *SS* 84. 1882-1883; *BS* 94. 3129-3131.

⁶³ *JTS* 199. 5357-5358.

⁶⁴ Ma, Changshou 1962, p. 239.

⁶⁵ See *SS* 84. 1882-1883.

⁶⁶ Wu, Tingxie 1922, p. 5a.

⁶⁷ Shiratori 1933, p. 51.

can be roughly identified as in the southeast of the Bo Shiwei, southwest of the Da Shiwei, and northwest of the Bei Shiwei, or in other words, southwest of the Gan River Basin, and southeast of the Erguna River Basin. Therefore the scope of the Shiwei's territory in the period from the Northern Qi to Sui can be approximated, it reached the Huolin River to the south, the Erguna River to the west, the Nenjiang River to the east, and the lower reaches of the Erguna River to the north.

In the Tang period, it is known that there were twenty Shiwei tribes, according to the records in dynastic histories. They were the Wusugu, Yisaimo, Saiezhi, Hejie, Wuluohu, Nali, Lingxi, Shanbei, Huangtou, Da Ruzhe, Xiao Ruzhe, Powo, Nebeizhi, Luotuo, Dong Shiwei, Xi Shiwei, Da Shiwei, Mengwu Shiwei, Luo zu Shiwei and Dagui.⁶⁸

In accordance with the historical materials and some identified geographical locations, the approximate geographical distributions of the southern section of the Shiwei tribes can be described. The Wusugu tribe, which was bounded in the west by the Uighur, was located southwest of the Lake Julun (modern Lake Hulun). To the east of the Wusugu, there was the Yisaimo tribe. Again to the east, the Saihezhi tribe was located south of the Cuo River (modern Huolin River). Again to the east there was the Hejie tribe, and the Wuluohu (it was called Wuluohou in the Northern Wei Dynasty as recorded in the *Wei Shu*) tribe, which was in the east of the Hejie. In addition to the east there was the Nali tribe.⁶⁹ According to the foregoing discussion, it is known that the Wuluohu was located in the west of Ulahot City and north of the Huoli River. Thus the scope of the above tribes of the Southern Shiwei can roughly be described. They were probably located in a long and narrow region, which reached Dzargalant of Mongolia to the west, Baicheng City of Jilin Province to the east, the area south of the Huolin River to the south, and the area north of Mount Laotou to the north.

The nine tribes, which were derived from the northern Shiwei in the Sui Dynasty, were the Lingxi Shiwei, Shanbei Shiwei, Huangtou Shiwei, Da Ruzhe Shiwei, Xiao Ruzhe Shiwei, Powo Shiwei, Nabei Shiwei, Luotuo Shiwei and Damo Shiwei.⁷⁰ They could be regarded as the northern section of the Shiwei in the Tang Dynasty. Summing up the study of Sun Xiuren *et al.*, the scope of the geographical location of the above tribes can be roughly identified. It reached the Yimin River to the west; the Nemor River and Wuyur River to the east; the Arun River to the north; and the Chaor River to the south. Almost all these tribes lived along the Nenjiang River, except for the Da Ruzhe Shiwei, which was located in the Yinmen River Basin.⁷¹

⁶⁸ See *JTS* 199. 5356-5358.

⁶⁹ *Idem.*

⁷⁰ See the *JTS* 199. 5357; *TD* 200. 5488.

⁷¹ See Sun, Xiuren *et al.* 1985, pp. 22-23.

Additionally, according to the *Jiu Tangshu*, the locations of the other Shiwei tribes can also be deduced. The Xi Shiwei was located in the source of the Erguna River. The Da Shiwei tribes inhabited still south of the lower reaches of the Erguna River, north of the Great Xing'an Range, almost the same as in the period from the Northern Qi to Sui Dynasties. The Mengwu Shiwei lived in the modern Emur River valley, and the Luo zu Shiwei lived in the northeast of modern Jingqili River. All These four tribes were located along the Erguna River.⁷²

Summing up the above discussion, the four boundaries of all the Shiwei tribes in the Tang Dynasty can be approximately described by the following: the eastern boundary was the modern Jingqili River; the western was the west of the modern Lake Hulun; the northern was the modern Sea of Okhotsk; and the southern was the south of the modern Huoli River.

Geographically, all the Shiwei tribes inhabited the north of the Khitan who were centered in the Shira Muren and Laoha River valley. Both the *Jiu Tangshu* and the *Xin Tangshu* clearly state that the Khitan bordered the Shiwei to the north, while the Shiwei neighbored the Khitan to the south.⁷³ In addition, according to Sun Jinji & Zhang Baizhong's study, the northern border of the Khitan in the Tang Dynasty was the Huang River (modern Shira Muren River). Their sphere of activities, however, could probably reach the Olji Moron River and Xinkan River.⁷⁴ From the above discussion, it can be seen that it was the southern section of the Shiwei who lived in the Huoli River Basin⁷⁵ and neighbored the Khitan to the south in the Tang Dynasty. However the southern section of the Shiwei and the Khitan did not closely neighbor each other, and there would have been a vast vacant land between them.

The ethnic affiliations of the Shiwei and relations with the Khitan. "Shiwei", as a name of an independent people, is first mentioned in the *Wei Shu* as early as the 5th Century. Their ethnic position and linguistic affiliations are not clearly identified in the Chinese historical Documents.

The *Wei Shu* states,

(失韋) 語與庫莫奚, 契丹, 豆莫婁國同.⁷⁶

(The Shiwei 失韋) language was the same as those of the Kumo Xi, Khitan and Doumolou States.

The *Sui Shu* maintains,

⁷² See *JTS* 199. 5356-5358.

⁷³ *JTS* 199. 5349 & 5357; *XTS* 219. 6167 & 6176.

⁷⁴ Sun, Jinji & Zhang, Bozhong 1986, p. 28.

⁷⁵ *Idem.*

⁷⁶ *WS* 100. 2221.

室韋, 契丹之類也。其南者為契丹, 在北者號室韋。⁷⁷

The Shiwei were the same kind people as the Khitan. The southern part was called the Khitan, while the northern part was called the Shiwei.

The *Jiu Tangshu* records,

室韋者, 契丹之別類也。⁷⁸

The Shiwei were a collateral branch of the Khitan.

The *Xin Tangshu* gives more confused information,

室韋, 契丹別種, 東胡之北邊, 蓋丁零苗裔也 ... 其語言, 靺鞨也。⁷⁹

The Shiwei, who were a collateral branch of the Khitan inhabited the northern boundary of the Donghu, were probably the descendants of the Dingling ... Their language was the same as that of the Mohe.

According to the *Wei Shu*, *Sui Shu* and *Jiu Tangshu*, it seems that the Shiwei were of Khitan origin, since the Shiwei and Khitan shared the similar ethnic stock and the same language as recorded in the above three dynastic histories. However, the text in the *Xin Tangshu* on describing the origin of the Shiwei seems very obscure. The Khitan have been identified as of Xianbei origin and spoke Para-Mongolic.⁸⁰ The Dingling were Turkic speakers, since they were ethnically related to the later Uighurs.⁸¹ The Mohe were descendants of the Sushen and ancestors of the Jurchen, and identified as Tungus speakers.⁸² How could a people, who are a branch of the Khitan, a Mongolic speaking people, had the Turkic speaking ancestors and spoke Turgus? This question has puzzled later researchers for generations until the present, and leads to sharp debates among modern scholars.

Regarding the Origin of the Shiwei, there are many different viewpoints. Their Donghu or Xianbei origin was held by Shiratori, Wittfogel & Feng and many other Modern Scholars.⁸³ Their Sushen affiliation was postulated by Feng Junshi and Zhao Zhan.⁸⁴ Lü Tianguang and Gu Qingyao believe that the Shiwei were the descendants of the Dingling.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Sun Jinji argues that the Shiwei were neither of Donghu, Sushen nor Dingling origins, and that they had

⁷⁷ *SS* 84. 1882.

⁷⁸ *JTS* 199. 5356.

⁷⁹ *XTS* 219. 6176.

⁸⁰ See Chapter 3.

⁸¹ *WS* 103. 2307; Zhao, Zhenji 1992, pp. 66-75.

⁸² Wang, Zhonghan 1994, pp. 466-467.

⁸³ See Shiratori 1933 part 2, p. 25-56; Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 22; Yi, Linzhen 1979, p. 64.

⁸⁴ See Sun, Xiuren *et al.* 1985, pp. 2-3.

⁸⁵ See *Idem.* p. 3.

their own independent ethnic system.⁸⁶ Moreover, Wang Zhonghan maintains that the Shiwei had multiple ethnic origins including the Xianbei, Türks and Tungus, for many different origins of the Shiwei are recorded in the historical material. Despite this, he added that the main part of the Shiwei were of Xianbei origin, descendants of the Donghu.⁸⁷ In my opinion, among the above mentioned viewpoints the last one is relatively reasonable, even though not enough sufficient evidence has been provided.

My contention is that the Shiwei could be regarded as a tribal complex. In the course of its development, it was formed by many different ethnic tribes with languages belonging to Altaic, including the Xianbei, Turkic and Tungus peoples. As for which ethnic group each part of the Shiwei tribes affiliated, Wang Zhonghan also points out that the western part of the Shiwei were of Turkish origin, the middle part was of the Xianbei origin and the eastern part were of Tungus origin. This statement, however, seems too general to be convincing and is somewhat questionable.

In describing the origin of the Shiwei, all of the above listed four official dynastic histories record that it somewhat related to the Khitan, who were of Xianbei origin. In the *Weishu*, it is recorded that the language of the Shiwei was the same as that of the Khitan; in the *Sui Shu*, it is claimed that the Shiwei belonged to the same kind of people as the Khitan; and in both the *Xin Tangshu* and *Jiu Tangshu*, it is claimed that the Shiwei were a collateral branch of the Khitan. In this sense, the Shiwei, exactly some tribes of the Shiwei, undoubtedly had some ethnic relations with the Khitan. Yet which tribes among the Shiwei shared the same ethnic stock with the Khitan is difficult to identify.

The theory that the Shiwei language was the same as that of the Khitan is raised by the *Wei Shu*. In the *Wei Shu*, it is written as Shiwei 失韋. Some scholars believe that the Shiwei 失韋 was merely a single tribe of the Shiwei tribal complex in the period of the Northern Wei Dynasty. Besides, there were the Wuluohou, Da Shiwei and other tribes, which belonged to the Shiwei tribal complex, in the same period.⁸⁸ It could be deduced that it was the Shiwei 失韋 tribe who spoke the same language as that of the Khitan. The other evidence found in the *Sui Shu* is that the title of the chieftain of the northern Shiwei was called *Mohefu*.⁸⁹ It is almost the same as the title of chieftain of the Khitan, called *Mohefu*. It also is known from the *Weishu* that the Shiwei 失韋 had the same funeral custom as the Khitan. Therefore, the Shiwei 失韋 could be tentatively identified as the part of the Shiwei who shared the same ethnic stock with the Khitan. According to Fang

⁸⁶ See *Idem.* p. 4.

⁸⁷ Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p. 420.

⁸⁸ Sun, Xiuren *et al.* 1985, pp. 85-86.

⁸⁹ *SS* 84. 1881 & 1883.

Zhuangyou's study, the so-called northern Shiwei in the Sui period might have been the Shiwei 失韋 in the Northern Wei Dynasty, which was located near modern Qiqihar in the Nenjiang River valley.⁹⁰ An added weight can be given to this assertion. The *Description of the Shiwei* of the *Sui Shu* records that the men's hairstyle of the southern Shiwei was loosely hung down (*pifa* in classical Chinese).⁹¹ However the men's hairstyle of the Shiwei 失韋 recorded in the *Wei Shu* was plaited hair.⁹² Moreover, the southern Shiwei's funeral custom differed from that of the Shiwei 失韋.⁹³ The former had an awning-funeral, and the later a tree-funeral. It can be seen that the southern Shiwei and Shiwei 失韋 were not the same ethnic people. The *Sui Shu*, *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* all record that the origin of the Shiwei somewhat related to the Khitan, but unfortunately none of them points out which tribes among the Shiwei had ethnic relations with the Khitan. In spite of the lack of material, it could be inferred that they probably were the tribes who frequently made contact with the Chinese courts. In the *Sui Shu*, it is recorded that "the northern Shiwei often sent envoys to present tributes to (the Sui court), others did not come".⁹⁴ In the Tang Dynasty the northern Shiwei had developed into nine tribes: the Lingxi Shiwei, Shanbei Shiwei, Huangtou Shiwei, Da Ruzhe Shiwei, Xiao Ruzhe Shiwei, Powo Shiwei, Nabei Shiwei, Luotuo Shiwei and Damo Shiwei. These Shiwei tribes frequently made contact with the Tang court.⁹⁵ Therefore, from the above discussion a deduction can be made. That is the northern Shiwei or at least some tribes among the northern Shiwei spoke the same or similar language as the Khitan, and their ethnic origin somehow related to the Khitan. Concerning the ethnic relationship between the Shiwei and the Khitan, Janhunen provides a more detailed theory, "the ethnonymic distinction between the Shiwei and Khitan suggests that the division had been completed between the branches leading to Proto-Mongolic and Para-Mongolic".⁹⁶ I suppose that the Shiwei, which is mentioned here by Janhunen, probably refers to the northern Shiwei. Nevertheless, which tribes among the above mentioned nine tribes of the northern Shiwei, which related ethnically to the Khitan cannot be identified precisely, because of the lack of sources.

Concerning the other ethnic origins of the Shiwei, the information that the dynastic histories provide is extremely deficient and obscure. However, with the help of the other historical materials and synthetic analysis on them, some

⁹⁰ Fang, Zhuangyou 1931.

⁹¹ *SS* 84. 1882.

⁹² *WS* 100. 2221.

⁹³ *cf. WS* 100. 2221; *SS* 84. 1882.

⁹⁴ *SS* 84. 1883.

⁹⁵ See *JTS* 199. 5357; *TD* 200. 5488.

⁹⁶ Janhunen 1996, p. 187.

conjectures can be possibly made. When describes the Shiwei tribes, the *Tang Huiyao* vol. 96 records,

次東又有烏洛護部落，一名烏羅渾，元魏謂之烏落侯，居磨蓋獨山北，噶河之側。次部落自魏太武真君四年，歷北齊，周，隋及武德已後，朝貢不絕。⁹⁷

Eastward again, there was the Wuluohu tribe, the other name was Wuluohun, it was called Wuluohou in the Yuan Wei. It inhabited north of the Mount Mogaidu, and beside the Chuo River. This tribe had presented homage and paid tributes continually since the fourth year of Taiwu Zhenjun (444) (of the Northern Wei), throughout the Northern Qi, Zhou and Sui until the years after reign period of Wude (618-626).

In the *Tang Huiyao* vol. 99, on the Wuluohun, it reads

烏羅渾，蓋後魏烏洛侯也，今亦謂之烏洛護。東與靺鞨，南與契丹，北與烏丸為鄰。風土與靺鞨同。貞觀六年，朝貢使至。⁹⁸

The Wuluohun was the Wuluohou in the later Wei Dynasty. Today it is also called Wuluohu. The Territory adjoined the Mohe to the east, Khitan to the south and Wuwan to the north. Their folk customs were the same as that of the Mohe.

The theory that "their language was the same as that of the Mohe" in the *Xin Tangshu* might refer to the Wuluolun tribe and some others nearby the Shiwei tribes probably in the east. Thus it can be inferred that the eastern part of the Shiwei or at least the Wuluohun and nearby tribes probably were of Tungus origin.

The name "Da Shiwei" first occurred in the historical records in the Sui Dynasty. According to the study of Fang Zhuangyou, the ancestors of the Da Shiwei were the Tantan who were a branch of the remnants of the Rouran.⁹⁹ At the beginning of the 5th Century, the Rouran founded a political power, which lasted for about one and half a centuries. In 555, the authority of the Rouran was overthrown by the newly rising Turkish Empire. The Rouran people were then dispersed. A branch of the remnant Rouran migrated to the northwest of the Great Xing'an Range, and used their famous chieftain's name "Tantan or Da Tan" to call themselves. They were gradually incorporated into the Shiwei tribal complex. In the *Sui Shu*, they were for the first time called the Da Shiwei.¹⁰⁰ As for the ethnic origin of the Rouran, most of the historical sources state that they were the descendants of the Xiongnu or a collateral branch of the Xiongnu. Some others state that they were descendants of the Donghu or mixed barbarians beyond the northern border of China Proper.¹⁰¹ The modern Japanese scholar Shiratori

⁹⁷ *THY* 96. 1721.

⁹⁸ *Idem* 99. 1771.

⁹⁹ Sun, Xiuren *et al.* 1985, p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ *SS* 84. 1882.

¹⁰¹ Wang, Zhonghan 1994, p. 252.

maintains that the Rouran consisted of a part of the Xiongnu who declared themselves the Xianbei, and a part of the Xianbei which assimilated with the Xiongnu.¹⁰² It can be seen the main body of the Rouran were of Xiongnu origin. Therefore, as descendants of a branch of the Rouran, the Da Shiwei might be tentatively identified as the Turkish origin, or at least contained some Turkish elements, to a great extent. Additionally, the record of "*descendants of the Dingling*" in the *Xin Tangshu* probably refers to a part of the Shiwei people. On account of the lack of sources, the origins of the other Shiwei tribes have to be left as an open question.

The Shiwei's political position in the Tang Dynasty and relations with the Khitan. The Shiwei, in the periods of the Sui and Tang, were relatively weak in the northwestern Manchuria. Their form of social organization appeared fairly loose and still remained at tribal level. Clans and tribes were the basic social patterns. The productive activities were organized by the tribal leaders, as described in the *Xin Tangshu*, "in hunting (the tribes) were banded together, and dispersed afterward; the tribes did not rule over one another or submitted to one another".¹⁰³ It can be seen that no united tribal confederation had been formed yet by the Shiwei. Compared with their southern neighbors the Khitan, and the eastern neighbors, the Mohe, in the same period, the social organization of the Shiwei was not as developed. On account of their lower level of social organization, as declared in the *Xin Tangshu*, "they finally could not become a strong power, although they were valiant and belligerent".¹⁰⁴

The Shiwei's political fate, as the Khitan in great part of their pre-dynastic period, "was largely determined by their far more powerful neighbors and by ever-changing balance of power between the successive regimes ruling northern China, on the one hand, and belligerent tribal neighbors ... on the other".¹⁰⁵ When China had fallen into an anarchy at the end of the Sui Dynasty and the other nomadic people, the Türks, were getting stronger in northern Asia simultaneously, the Shiwei submitted to the Türks, under the control of the three Tutuns sent by the Turkish supreme leader,¹⁰⁶ so did the Khitan who were controlled by the Tutun, Pandie, who was sent by the Turkish Shabolue khaghan.¹⁰⁷ At the beginning of the 7th Century, the great Chinese Tang Dynasty was established. The Shiwei and many other tribal peoples were gradually drawn into its political orbit. In the period from 618 to 629, the Shiwei frequently presented homage and

¹⁰² See Sun, Xiuren 1985, p. 78.

¹⁰³ *XTS* 219. 6176.

¹⁰⁴ *Idem.*

¹⁰⁵ Twirchett & Tietze. In Franke & Twitchett, ed., 1994, p. 45.

¹⁰⁶ *SS* 84. 1882.

¹⁰⁷ *Idem.*

paid tributes to the Tang court. As a response, the Tang court set Shizhou, which was subordinate to the Governor-general of Yingzhou to control the Shiwei and Khitan tribes in 629.¹⁰⁸ Until 632, the Wuluohu and some other Shiwei tribes submitted to the Tang.

After the first Turkic Empire was defeated by the Tang in 630, another group of the Turkic speaking people, the Xueyantuo, succeeded the Türks to be the lords of northern Asia for the time being. They migrated eastward to become neighbors of the Shiwei. Afterward, as relatively weak tribes, the Shiwei and Wuluohu were frequently invaded and tribesmen were captured by their stronger neighbors. Some twenty years later, with the help of the Tang court, the captured people from the Shiwei, Wuluohu and Mohe were returned back to their own tribes.

At the end of the 7th Century, the Second Turkish Empire under Mochuo was becoming more powerful. Under its pressure the Shiwei began to appear to give some indications of deviation from the Tang court. A few years later in 696, the Khitan rebellion led by Li Jinzhong and Sun Wanrong erupted. The northeastern frontier of China was continually involved in the war, until the rebellion was put down in 701 by the Tang allied with the Türks. The Tang court lost its control of Manchuria in the next several years. Therefore, the Shiwei and the other Manchurian tribes submitted to the Türks.

In the later reign of Mochuo, the Turkish power was on the decline. The pressure on the vassal tribes of the Türks was, therefore, becoming less. The Shiwei took advantage of this to break away from the Türks. In 707, "(the Shiwei) came to pay homage and present tributes (to the Tang court), and asked for an alliance to attack the Türks".¹⁰⁹ This means that the tributary relation between the Shiwei and Tang resumed. Such a peaceful relationship remained for about half a century in the following years. The military governor of Pinglu was set by the Tang court to control the Shiwei and Mohe.¹¹⁰ In this period, more and more Shiwei tribes submitted and presented tributes to the Tang court, such as the Dagui tribe, Lingxi Shiwei, Huangtou Shiwei, Hejie Shiwei, Ludan Shiwei and Ruzhe Shiwei. During this very period, with the exception of the tributary relation, the Shiwei also chimed in with the Türks and raided the Tang borders occasionally.¹¹¹ However, the Shiwei attitude towards the Türks was also quite fickle. The Turkic Orkhon Inscription written in 732 declared the thirty clans of

¹⁰⁸ *JTS* 39. 1523.

¹⁰⁹ *XTS* 219. 6177.

¹¹⁰ See *ZZTJ* 215. 6847-6849.

¹¹¹ *JTS* 145. 3938; *ZZTJ* 213. 6798.

the Tartar, who were believed the other name of some Shiwei tribes,¹¹² were enemies of them.¹¹³

In 755 a disastrous rebellion led by An Lushan and Shi Siming erupted, and north China entirely fell into turmoil. The Shiwei were forced to be involved in the rebellion against the Tang, together with the Tongluo (a confederation of the Turkish Tiele tribes), Xi and Khitan peoples. The tribes then surrendered again to their steppe lords, the Uighurs who were the successors of the Türks.

In the period of Dali (766-779), the Shiwei submitted to the Tang again. They frequently paid homage and presented tributes to the Tang court. These tributary events are relatively completely recorded in the *Cefu Yuangui*.¹¹⁴

The An-Shi rebellion and its aftermath broke the power of the Tang Empire. The central government lost its control of the Hebei region¹¹⁵ where local military governors were becoming more and more independent. As Niu Sengru, who was the prime minister of Emperor Wenzong's court, argued at a court debate, "The Fanyang region has not belonged to imperial government any more since the An-Shi Rebellion".¹¹⁶ In addition, the Tang court was frustrated in its frontier defense. Taking advantage of China's temporary weakness, some ethnic vassal peoples were eager to try to expand their own political forces by taking the offensive against the Tang and invaded its territory. As the Tibetans were doing in the west, the Xi who were strong in military for the time being frequently raided the Tang borders, plundering human beings and looting livestock, in the northeast.¹¹⁷ According to the historical records, in the fourth year of Zhenyuan (788), the Xi raided the Zhenwu army (located in modern Hohhot) together with the Shiwei, slaughtering both the Chinese and the Uighur commissioners, capturing the frontier people and plundering their domestic animals.¹¹⁸ The Shiwei as relative weak tribes almost always wavered between the stronger powers. They were involved in the campaign over the Chinese frontier, probably by the coercion of the Xi, their stronger neighbors to the southwest.

In 789, the Shiwei sent envoys to the Tang court to apologize for their offence.¹¹⁹ During the period from 792 to 842, while having been Uighur vassals,

¹¹² Yi Linzhen 1979, p. 65.

¹¹³ The Turkic Orkhon Inscription, translated into Chinese by Geng, Shimin 耿世民, enclosed in Lin, Ga 1988, p. 257.

¹¹⁴ *CFYG* 972. 11415.

¹¹⁵ During the Tang period, the so-called Hebei (or Heshuo) covered the area north of the Yellow River from present Henan and Shandong provinces up to the northern border of China proper.

¹¹⁶ *JTS* 180. 4676.

¹¹⁷ See 6.2. of Chapter 6 for detail.

¹¹⁸ *XTS* 219. 6177; *ZZTJ* 233. 7524-7515.

¹¹⁹ *XTS* 219. 6177.

the Shiwei still frequently presented tributes to the Tang court.¹²⁰ After the Uighur Empire was brought to an end by the Kirghiz¹²¹ in 840, they submitted to the Tang and killed the Uighur commissioners by an order of the Tang.¹²² From 789 onward, no aggressive actions conducted by the Shiwei could be found throughout the Chinese historical data, until some of their tribes were incorporated into the Khitan and some others migrated to the northwest around the turn of the 10th Century.

At the end of 9th Century, taking advantage of the collapse of central orders both in China and on the steppe, the Khitan then started their process of establishing an autonomous political force. Their targets for military expansion were first directed to the neighboring ethnic tribes. The Shiwei, who still remained a separate social organization at this very time, together with the Xi, Jurchen and other weaker tribes in Manchuria, fell victim to the Khitan military conquests. In the period of Guangqi (885-888), under their ruler Qinde, the Khitan attacked the Shiwei and Xi, and these smaller tribes were all subdued.¹²³ In the early years of Abaoji's time (872-926), the Khitan conquered five clans of the Xi and seven clans of the Shiwei, who were believed the closest Shiwei tribes to the Khitan by Hu Sanxing.¹²⁴ By the end of the 9th Century, when Abaoji was the Dama Yueshali, the commander of the khaghan's personal guard, he forced the Xiao Huang (tou) Shiwei tribes to surrender.¹²⁵ In 901 Abaoji was elected the Yilijin of the Yila tribe, taking charge of military operations. In this year, he defeated the Shiwei, Yujue and Xi, and captured a great number of people.¹²⁶ In 904, 905, 906, and 907 Abaoji mounted continuous campaigns against the Heichezi Shiwe in the north, and finally subdued them and incorporated them into the Khitan confederation in 909.

In addition to the submission of the Shiwei tribes and under the great pressure from the Khitan's strong expansion to the north, some other Shiwei tribes started their migration westward or southward at the same time. From the end of the 9th Century onward, the Shiwei tribes underwent a process of a tribal recombination and a gradual assimilation with stronger ethnic peoples, the Khitan, Jurchen, Mongols and Han Chinese.¹²⁷ The Shiwei are even mentioned in the Inscription on Memorial Tablet of Yelü Yanning, it reads:

¹²⁰ *Idem.*

¹²¹ For the information of the Kirghiz, see *XTS* 217. 6146-6148 & *ZZTJ* 246. 7946-7947.

¹²² *ZZTJ* 246. 7967.

¹²³ *XTS* 219. 6172.

¹²⁴ *ZZTJ* 266. 8678.

¹²⁵ *LS* 1. 1.

¹²⁶ *Idem.* 1-2.

¹²⁷ See Sun, Xiuren *et al.* 1985 and Wang, Zhonghan 1994 for details.

公威極北之疆境, 押旦戾之失圍¹²⁸

His prestige spread far to the northern borders (of the Liao), overseeing the stubborn and intractable Shiwei 失圍.

It can be seen from the above inscription that until the times of the Liao, the Shiwei or some tribes of the Shiwei, who lived in the northern frontier of the Liao, still capriciously submitted to or rebelled against the Liao. It is also worth to be mentioning that among them the Mengwu Shiwei, who were originally located in the Emur River Basin, were called the Menggu in the Liao Dynasty, and developed into a great tribal confederation including sixteen tribes by the end of the Jurchen Jin Dynasty. This confederation became the main body of the Mongols who established the great Yuan Empire in the 13th Century. Up to the end of the 13th Century, the Shiwei as a name of ethnic people disappeared from the historical sources.

6.4. The Khitan and the Türks

The rise of the Türks. The term Turk (Tujue in Chinese transcription), in broad sense refers to a variety of Turkic-speaking tribes including the Tiele tribal confederation and the other Turkic-speaking peoples, while in the narrow sense it refers only to the Türks and they founded Turkish empires. Here the term it is discussed mainly as the eastern Türks who had closer relations with the Manchurian tribes and north China during the period from the middle of the 5th to the middle of the 8th Centuries.

In middle of the 5th Century, the Türks as a name of a group of people, who were descended from a collateral branch of the Xiongnu, appeared in the Chinese historical source. According to the *Zhou Shu*, at that time, the Türks, as subjects of the Rouran, inhabited the south of the Jin Mountains (modern Altai Mountains).¹²⁹ Some other Chinese sources make different claims. The *Sui Shu* records that the Türks were mixed barbarians in Pingliang (modern eastern Gansu).¹³⁰ While, the *Bei Shi* claims that the Türks originally inhabited the east of the Xihai (the Caspian Sea).¹³¹ Most modern scholarships accept the Xiongnu origin of the Türks. As claimed by Janhunén, "The Türks originated from some marginal section of the Xiongnu confederation".¹³²

¹²⁸ The Memorial Tablet Inscriptions of Yelü Yanning. Quoted from Xiang, Nan 1995, p. 85.

¹²⁹ *ZS* 50. 907; *XTS* 215. 6028.

¹³⁰ *SS* 84. 1863.

¹³¹ *BS* 99. 3285.

¹³² Janhunén 1996, p. 189.

In the second half of the 5th Century, the Rouran, who had been the overlords of the steppe for nearly a century from the beginning of the 5th Century, began to give some indications of decline. Continual resistance and fugitiveness staged by the subdued ethnic tribes greatly crippled the strength of the Rouran both in their politics and economy. In 487, over 100,000 subject Chile (some tribes of the Tiele) households split away from the Rouran and migrated westward to the Tarim Basin, where they founded an independent Gaoche state, and always showed hostility to the Rouran in the following three decades.¹³³ The Rouran, therefore, lost their control of the West Regions. At the beginning of the 6th Century, a series of internal dissensions happened within the ruling class of the Rouran, struggling for the right of throne succession. This ultimately caused a submission of the main force of the Rouran led by Anagui to the Northern Wei in 520.¹³⁴ In spite of an ephemeral revival in the time of Anagui, the Rouran tended to be inevitably on the wane. Profound internal crises and formidable foreign attacks finally threw the Rouran into destruction. As for the situation in north China, in the first half of the 6th Century, the Northern Wei, a semi-united foreign dynasty founded by the Tuoba Xianbei, was also in a difficult position. Because of profound social contradictions caused by inappropriate administration of the Northern Wei regime, successive rebellions by the frontier troops and subject tribal peoples represented by the revolt of Six Garrisons marked the end of the Northern Wei Dynasty. With the weakness of the central authority, the local forces began to become more powerful. A Qihu tribal leader Erzhu Rong intervened in the throne succession in the Northern Wei court in 528, and murdered the entire court. This directly hastened the collapse of the Northern Wei. In 534 the Northern Wei state split into two rival parts, the Eastern Wei (534-550) succeeded by the Northern Qi (550-577), and the Western Wei (535-556) succeeded by the Northern Zhou (557-581). From then on, north China again had been in a disunited situation for almost half a century. At the same time and taking advantage of the collapse of central order both in north China and on the steppe, the Türks struggled for autonomy and increased their own power quite rapidly.

By the 520s and after Anagui surrendered to the Northern Wei, the Türks led by Tumen broke away from the Rouran and started to develop their own military and political power eastward rapidly. At the same time, they also began to make contacts with China initially for economic purposes. Not until 542, did the Türks migrated into the Mongolian steppe north of the great bend of the Yellow River.¹³⁵ In subsequent years and for some strategic reasons, the Türks frequently involved themselves in military conflicts alternatively with the Rouran and

¹³³ *WS* 103. 2310.

¹³⁴ *Idem.* 2298.

¹³⁵ *ZS* 27. 454.

Gaoche. In 546, when the Gaoche intended to attack the Rouran, the Türks intercepted and defeated them on behalf of the Rouran, capturing over 50,000 tents in all. The Türks became much stronger and prominent after this victory. When their demand for a marriage alliance with the Rouran as a reward was rejected, the Turkish leader Tumen killed the envoys who delivered the message and broke off the relationship with the Rouran. The Türks turned to seek a marriage alliance with the Western Wei court, and succeeded in getting a Chinese princess in 551. One year after the political alliance with the Chinese regime was established, Tumen mounted a large-scale attack on the Rouran and utterly defeated them in the north of Huaihuang (north of modern Zhangbei County of Hebei Province) in 552. The Rouran khaghan Anagui committed suicide. The Türks, therefore, occupied the greater part of the Mongolian steppe, which was originally under Rouran control. Tumen declared himself Yili khaghan in the same year. This marked the beginning of the Turkish Empire. Only one year after being a Turkish khaghan, Tumen died, his son Keluo succeeded him and launched another attack on the remnants of Rouran. He died soon after and was succeeded by his brother Yijin whose title was Mugan khaghan.¹³⁶

It was in the Mugan khaghan's time that the vast territory of the Turkish Empire was established by the further expansion to the north, the west and the east. In 555, the Mugan khaghan attacked the remnants of the Rouran once more and thoroughly defeated them. He occupied the whole territory of the Rouran that reached the Lake Baikal to the north, north China to the south, the Altai Mountains to the west and the western border of Manchuria to the east. The remnants of the Rouran leadership were driven into the eastern China, the Northern Qi Dynasty. Taking advantage of this great triumph over their former overlords, the Türks embarked upon further series of military conquests against the other neighboring tribes. In the west they defeated the Yanda (the Hephthalites inhabited west of the Pamirs); in the north they incorporated the Qigu (the Chinese transcription of the later Kirghiz) into their territory, and in the east they advanced to the west bank of the upper branches of the Liao River, forcing the Khitan to abandon their homeland and to move eastward and temporarily resided with ten thousand households within the territory of the Koryö (Gaoli).¹³⁷ In 556, allied with the Western Wei, the Türks defeated the Tuyuhun at the shore of the Lake Qinghai. During 561 to 567, the Türks led by the Mugan khaghan's uncle Shidianmi mounted campaigns against the Yanda on many occasions, finally thoroughly eliminated them by making an alliance with the Persians. Afterward, taking advantage of the decline of the Persian Sasan Empire, the Türks ultimately

¹³⁶ *Idem* 50. 908-909; *BS* 99. 3286-3287.

¹³⁷ *BS* 94. 3128.

occupied all of the old territory of the Yanda ultimately. Up to the end of 560s, the territory of the Türks extended from western Manchuria in the east to the Caspian Sea in the west, and to the Lake Barkal in the north.

The foundations of the rise of Türks can be summed up in following ways. First of all, the external situation that was the decline of the Rouran and the breakup of north China, was in favor of the Türks. Secondly, the rise of the Türks, like any other nomadic peoples, depended mainly on their military might. The rapid military conquest in four directions established the vast territory of the Turkish Empire, and made the Türks the dominant power on the steppe. Thirdly, their economic base largely relied on the subsidies extracted or property looted from China and the silk trade with China. At that time, the two rival regimes in north China had been terrified by the Turkish conquests. The Northern Qi and Northern Zhou courts competed against each other to provide the Türks with lavish gifts, which made the Türks extremely wealthy for the time being. As said arrogantly by the Turkish Tuobo khaghan, the successor of the Mugan khaghan, my two sons in the south always show filial obedience, so I have no reason to worry about poverty¹³⁸. Based upon the above foundations, the Türks established a political domination that lasted over two centuries on the steppe, and their influence broadly impacted the neighboring peoples and on the course of the histories of Inner Asia and China. Since the very beginning of their rise, the Khitan, as relatively weak tribes just freed from the pressure of the Rouran, had been under Turkish control for about two hundred years.

The position of the Türks in the Sui Dynasty and relations with the Khitan. 1. The splitting up of the Türks. When the Sui finished unifying north China and was going to recover the south to form a single empire, the Türks had already become paramount on the steppe under a comparatively loose leadership. In 581, the Tuobo khaghan died. After an intensive struggle for the throne, Shetu succeeded to become the Shabolue khaghan. In order to avoid the internal crisis, he appointed his rivals Anluo, Daluobian and Chuluohou the junior khaghans. Chuluohou's initial title was Tulishe, which later became the Tuli khaghan and he was in charge of overseeing tribes west of the Liao River. The Khitan together with the Xi and Bai Xi had been under the control of the Tuli khaghan, since the beginning of the Sui.

The Turkish Empire under the leadership of Shabolue seemed somewhat unstable, because of not only the potential internal dissension, but also the cutoff of their subsidy payments from China. The policy towards the Türks initiated by emperor Wendi, the founder of the Sui, was unfavorable to them. The loss of subsidy and trade greatly threatened the economic base of the Turkish Empire.

¹³⁸ ZS 50. 911.

The response of the Türks was a large-scale raid on China along the northwestern frontier. The Türks were finally defeated by the Sui troops, even though they succeeded in plundering enormous booty initially. Almost simultaneously, a serious famine and a spreading epidemic disease were responsible for the death of many Turkish people.

However, both the defeat at the Chinese frontier and the natural disaster could not stop the internal power struggle within the Turkish ruling class. In fear of Daluobian's braveness and intrepidity, Shabolue initiated an attack on his people, defeated them and killed Daluobian's mother. Daluobian was forced to flee west to seek the Datou khaghan (Shabolue Khaghan's uncle who controlled the western part of the Türks)'s aid. With the Datou khaghan's help, Daluobian defeated his rival on many occasions, and recovered his old territory. Meanwhile, Shabolue's other cousins, Tanhan and Diqincha, broke away from him and went to seek refuge with the Datou khaghan and Daluobian. Thus Shabolue was utterly isolated, and the Turkish Empire split into two hostile parts, the eastern Türks led by Shabolue and the western Türks led by Datou and Daluobian. From then on, the conflicts between the eastern and western Türks lasted for almost half a century until the eastern Türks were destroyed by the Tang in 630.

2. The Eastern Turkish Empire and its relations with the Khitan. After breaking away from the western Türks, Shabolue fell into a difficult position. In addition to the threat from his Turkish rivals, the Khitan tribes revolted in Manchuria. In such a crucial situation, the eastern Türks submitted to the Sui for protection and aid against their external enemies. They paid tributes to the Sui court and got much more rewards in return every year until Shabolue died in 587.

With the establishment of the Sui Dynasty and its influence penetrating into the northeast, former Turkish vassals including the Khitan, Xi and Bai Xi tribes inclined towards the Sui's political orbit. When the Türks fell into internal dissension, their restraints over their subject peoples were getting weaker. Taking advantage of it, the Khitan tribes gradually extricated themselves out of Turkish control, and submitted to the Sui in the reign period of emperor Wendi. According to the *Sui Shu*, in the fourth year of Kaihuang (584), the Khitan chieftains led by their supreme leader came to pay homage to the Sui. In the fifth year of Kaihuang (585), all the Khitan tribesmen came to submit to the Sui, emperor Gaozu accepted them and settled them in their old land. Later, a collateral tribe of the Khitan, the Chufu tribe, defected against the Koryö and surrendered to the Sui, emperor Gaozu settled them north of Kexinajie. Towards the end of Kaihuang period, over four thousand households of a collateral tribe of the Khitan deserted the Türks and came to submit to the Sui.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ *SS* 84. 1881-1882.

In the period of the Shabolue khaghan, the Khitan tribes were under surveillance by a Turkish Tutun, named Pandie. While some Khitan tribes defected from the Türks and submitted to the Sui at the beginning of Kaihuang, some others were still under Turkish control. Due to the Turkish internal turmoil, the Turkish pressure over the Khitan got weaker. In 585, for resisting the Turkish oppression, the Khitan killed the Turkish Tutun Pandie.¹⁴⁰ Such a rebellious action by the Khitan strongly shocked Shabolue. Added to the threat from the western Türks, Shabolue found himself with no way out, and was forced to submit to the Sui for help. Later, the Khitan fought with the Türks again in 586.¹⁴¹ This shows that the Khitan had accumulated considerable strength at that time.

After the death of Shabolue, his brother Chuluohou succeeded the throne, becoming Yehu khaghan. Next year he was killed in the battle when he launched an expedition to the west. He was succeeded by his nephew, Yongyulü in 588. Yongyulü was titled Dulan khaghan. Initially, the Dulan khaghan continued to carry out the so-called "inner frontier policy"¹⁴², keeping peaceful relations with China. He sent envoys to pay tributes to the Sui court every year, and was permitted by the Sui court to set market along the Chinese frontier and trade with China. However after seven to eight years, because of the internal conflicts instigated by the Sui, the Dulan khaghan stopped the tributes and attacked the Sui frontier in 597. At the time the Sui was carrying out a policy of "*li qiang er he ruo* (keeping away from the stronger party while allying with the weaker one)" with the Türks, for sowing discord among them and to ultimately weaken and destroy them.¹⁴³ In carrying out this policy, the Sui court made rather a favorite of Rangan who was titled Tuli khaghan, a Turkish junior khaghan. Rangan was granted a Sui princess in marriage and awarded a lot of gifts. Moreover, instigated by the Sui, Rangan led his tribesmen to migrate southward to Shabolue's old town in Dujin, pressing on towards the Dulan khaghan's territory. All of these infuriated the Dulan khaghan, forcing him to rebel against the Sui. Next year, the Sui mounted several attacks on the Dulan khaghan and his supporters, the western Türks, for helping Rangan. The Dulan khaghan and the western Türks were utterly defeated.

In the tenth month of 599, Rangan was propped up by the Sui court to ascend the throne, and titled Qiming khaghan. In the Qiming khaghan's reign, the eastern Türk were vassals of the Sui in name for a decade until this pro-Chinese khaghan died in 609.¹⁴⁴ In such a relationship, both the eastern Türks and Sui court gained benefits from each other, particularly the Türks. For China, the northern frontier

¹⁴⁰ See *BS* 94. 3128; *ZZTJ* 176. 5482.

¹⁴¹ *SS* 84. 1881.

¹⁴² See Barfield 1989, chapter 2, pp. 32-81.

¹⁴³ See *ZZTJ* 178. 5543.

¹⁴⁴ See *SS* 84. 1872-1876; *ZZTJ* 178. 5568.

was keeping peaceful for over a decade; for the Türks, they were financed by bestowals from China to consolidate their economic basis, and were supported by Chinese aid to fight against their tribal rivals. They both also made use of each other as allies against invasions from outside tribal powers. For instance, in 605, when the Khitan raided Yingzhou, the Sui dispatched 20,000 Turkish cavalry under the control of Wei Yunqi, the Sui commander, against the Khitan. Finally the Khitan were defeated and 40,000 Khitan men and women were captured. The men were all killed, and half of the women and livestock products were bestowed on the Türks.¹⁴⁵ Politically, the repression of the Khitan revolt was in keeping with the wishes of both the Sui and Türks, because neither was willing to see a new frontier power come into existence.¹⁴⁶ Economically, the Türks were enriched by that war booty.

However, the situation changed after the Qimin khaghan died in 609. His son, Duoqi (Shibi khaghan), came to power. At this time, due to emperor Yangdi's despotic rule, the Sui Dynasty was on the decline. Its failures in the three campaigns against Korea not only made the Sui lose its prestige among the steppe peoples, but also caused internal revolts, which spread all over China. Under such circumstances, the eastern Türks under the Shibi khaghan changed their policy into a hostile one towards the Sui, and took advantage of this to rebel against the Sui and invade the south. The Türks were getting more powerful, due to their internal unification and external expansion. Most of the steppe tribes, from the Khitan and Shiwei in the east to the Tuyuhun and Gaochang in the west, deserted the Sui and submitted to the Türks. The Sui Empire fell further into internal disaster. Taking advantage of this, some local separatist regimes rose in north China. In order to get the Turkish aid against their rivals, these separatist regimes surrendered to the Türks and became Turkish vassals. Moreover, many frontier Chinese people went to seek refuge with the Türks to avoid the disaster of war. The Türks became even stronger while the short-lived Chinese Sui Dynasty ended in 618. Thereafter, the Khitan, who freed from the Sui control, "fell into the situation that they were under the Turkish oppression again, and threatened by the Koguryö (Gaogouli) from the east as well".¹⁴⁷

The position of the Türks in the Tang Dynasty and relations with the Khitan.

1. The decline of the eastern Türks. With the aid of the Türks, Li Yuan and his sons, as one of the separatist forces, destroyed most of their rivals in north China. In 618, the newly founded Tang Dynasty took the place of the Sui. In the following year, the Turkish Shibi khaghan died and was replaced by his brother,

¹⁴⁵ See *XTS* 103. 3993-3994; *ZZTJ* 180. 5621-5622.

¹⁴⁶ Barfield 1989, p. 168.

¹⁴⁷ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 96.

the Chuluo khaghan. One year later, the Chuluo khaghan died and succeeded by his brother Duobi, the Jieli khaghan in 620.

Under the Jieli khaghan's leadership, the Türks were becoming more aggressive and hostile towards China. In the reign period of emperor Gaozu (618-626), the Türks mounted frequent invasions into China. At the beginning, emperor Gaozu bestowed a large amount of property to the Türks in order to get peace along the northern frontier, since the Tang was still in the process of consolidating its power. But this did not satisfy the needs of the Türks. Hereafter the Türks raided the Chinese frontier on many occasions every year, making incursion into large area of China including modern Shanxi, Hebei, Shaanxi and Gansu provinces from 621 to 625. In this period, the Türks and Tang won the war between them alternatively. In addition, military conflicts alternated with reconciliation in the relationship between the Tang and the Türks.

In the ninth year of Wude (626), the Türks invaded Wugong (modern Wugong County of Shaanxi Province), which was very close to the Tang capital Chang'an (modern Xi'an of Shaanxi Province), with over 100,000 cavalry led by the Jieli khaghan. Chang'an was under martial war. The Tang troops led by Yuchi Jingde gave a counterattack on the Türks in Jingyang (modern Jingyang County of Shaanxi Province), and defeated them.¹⁴⁸ One month later, just after Li Shimin had deposed his father and become emperor Taizong, the Türks advanced towards the northern bank of the River Wei, only some twenty kilometers away from Chang'an. Emperor Taizong personally went to the opposite bank on horse back with only six retainers, and talked with Jieli across the river and blamed him for his breaking the agreement. The Turkish chiefs were startled and showed their respects to emperor Taizong. Soon after, the Tang troops came up in succession, each showing their deterrence. Under such a circumstance, Jieli was forced to make a peace proposal. Next day it was accepted by emperor Taizong with a horse sacrifice. The Turkish troops then withdrew from the Tang territory.¹⁴⁹

During this period, in addition to the external expansion into north China, the Jieli khaghan was also facing many internal troubles. The continuous military campaigns caused the Turkish people to fall into an abyss of misery. In 627, their subject tribes, the Xueyantuo, Huihe (the Uighurs) and Bayegu, rebelled against the Türks. The Jieli khaghan sent the Tuli khaghan to put them down, but failed. Tuli was punished by Jieli with lash and imprisonment. In the same year, the Türks were also subjected to heavy snow, which killed many livestock and froze and starved many tribal people to death. Next year in 628, with resentment against Jieli, Tuli rebelled and made an alliance with the Tang, starting a new round of

¹⁴⁸ *JTS* 194. 5157.

¹⁴⁹ *ZZTJ* 191. 6019-6020.

internal conflicts.¹⁵⁰ Following Tuli, the Khitan tribes led by Mohui, which were under the supervision of Tuli khaghan, surrendered to the Tang in 629.¹⁵¹ The Türks was not willing to see that their former vassals, the Khitan, broke away from them and submitted to their adversary the Tang, because this meant that their power was reduced even further. The Jieli khaghan asked the Tang for exchange Liang Shidu, a leader of a Chinese separatist regime against the Tang under Turkish protection, for the Khitan. This was refused by emperor Taizong.¹⁵² The eastern Türks were distinctly on the decline. At the same time, the Xueyantuo and some other Tiele tribes who were also Turkic speakers were rising up on the steppe, threatening the eastern Türks. Under such circumstances, Jieli had to ask to be Tang vassals in order to secure peace.

Since the Türks still supported Liang Shidu to rebel against the Tang after their submission, the Tang launched a large-scale punitive campaign against the Türks with over 100,000 troops. In 630, the Türks were utterly defeated and the Jieli khaghan was captured. Up to then, the Eastern Turkish Empire collapsed.¹⁵³ After half a year, a Khitan chieftain named Tanmozhe was sent by the Tang to persuade the northeast barbarians to submit to the Tang. More than ten Manchurian tribes of the Xi, Bai Xi and Shiwei all surrendered to the Tang.¹⁵⁴ The submission of these tribes to the Tang also influenced of the destruction of the Türks.

2. The Second Turkish Empire and its relations with the Khitan. After the collapse of the Türks, the subdued Turkish tribes, about 100,000 people, were settled inside the northern border of China, under the "loose rein" policy conducted by emperor Taizong of the Tang.¹⁵⁵ The northern frontier of China had maintained peace for about half a century. According to the ideology of Confucianism, to a large extent, the so-called "loose rein" was only in name. These barbarian tribes under the "loose rein" could still enjoy their independence to a certain degree. Actually, the Tang court rarely interfered in their internal affairs unless they undisguisedly rebelled against the Tang. In addition to the relative independence, the subdued tribes could also gain both financial support and political protection from the powerful Tang Empire. Under these conditions, the Türks gradually recovered their influence over the steppe in this period of time. In addition, the Tang foreign policy changed during the reign period of emperor

¹⁵⁰ *JTS* 194. 5158.

¹⁵¹ *Idem* 199. 5350.

¹⁵² *Idem*.

¹⁵³ *Idem* 194. 5159.

¹⁵⁴ *ZZTJ* 193. 6072-6073.

¹⁵⁵ See *JTS* 194. 5162-5163.

Gaozong and empress Wu (r. 649-705).¹⁵⁶ The attitude of the Tang court towards the Türks also changed. The Türks felt mistreated and turned hostile towards China. In 679, the Türks revolted. This also affected the Khitan relations with the Tang. In the same year the Khitan were encouraged by the Türks to raid Yingzhou together with the Xi.

After having reunited the Turkish tribes, Guduolu enthroned himself to be Jiedie Lishi khaghan in 682. This began the history of the Second Turkish Empire. Under Guduolu, the Türks became more aggressive. After dozens of campaigns were mounted against north China and other rival nomadic tribes on the steppe, the Türks got control of most of the Mongolian steppe and contended with China to the south,¹⁵⁷ laying a foundation for the newly established Turkish empire. In the process of this expansion, the Khitan, who were regarded by the Türks as a big threat from the east,¹⁵⁸ inevitably became a target of the Turkish attacks, again falling victim to them. According to the Tonyukuk (Dunyugu) Inscriptions, in his reign period from 682 to 691, Guduolu had fought with the Khitan seven times, and killed many Khitan people.¹⁵⁹ After this, the Khitan probably were forced to show some loyalty to the Türks. In 691 Guduolu died and was succeeded by his brother Mochuo. Under Mochuo, the Türks became serious problem for the Tang in the reign period of empress Wu.

With the growing strength of the Türks, the Khitan loyalty to the Tang wavered. In addition, with the local Chinese officer's mistreatment of them, a large-scale Khitan rebellion broke out in 696 led by Li Jinzhong and Sun Wanrong. For their own political and particularly economic benefits, the Türks were on the side of China during this rebellion. The Turkish Mochuo asked the Tang court to return the subdued Turkish households in Hexi, which had surrendered to the Tang after 630 and in return he would lead his troops and horses to attack the Khitan. This was permitted by the Tang court.¹⁶⁰ When the Khitan supreme chieftain, Li Jinzhong, died three months after the eruption of the rebellion, the Türks attacked the Khitan in their homeland in Songmo and captured Li Jinzhong and Sun Wanrong's wives and children. In return, Mochuo got two honorary titles from empress Wu.¹⁶¹ In the sixth month of 697, Sun

¹⁵⁶ See 7.3. of Chapter 7 for detail.

¹⁵⁷ According to the Turkic Orkhon inscriptions, translated into Chinese by Geng Shimin, enclosed in Lin, Gan 1988, pp. 257-258.

¹⁵⁸ In the Tonyukuk (Dunyugu) inscriptions, it is mentioned couple of times that "the attack from the Khitan in the east", see the Turkic Tonyukuk (Dunyugu) Inscriptions which is translated into Chinese by Geng, Shimin, enclosed in Lin, Gan 1988, pp. 245-247.

¹⁵⁹ The Turkic Tonyukuk Inscriptions, translated into Chinese by Geng, Shimin, enclosed in Lin, Gan 1988, pp. 246, 251.

¹⁶⁰ *JTS* 194. 5168.

¹⁶¹ *ZZTJ* 205. 6510.

Wangrong was at a stalemate with the Tang troops. Taking advantage of this, the Türks again attacked the Khitan at the rear, assaulting and plundering the Khitan's new city that had built three months ago for settling the old, the weak and the women and storing the looted weapons and property. At the same time, the Xi who were originally the assistants of the Khitan in the rebellion, changed their allegiance and assisted the Tang troops to attack the Khitan. The Khitan were utterly defeated. The remnant Khitan masses gave their allegiance to the Türks. Using the advantage of their assistance to China in putting down the Khitan rebellion as political counters, the Türks extorted a lot of political and economic benefits from the Tang court.¹⁶² From this time, the Khitan had submitted to the Türks for more than forty years until the collapse of the Second Turkish Empire in 745. The *Jiu Tangshu* states, "Since (the year of) Shengong (697), the Khitan and Xi were often imposed and enslaved by the Türks".¹⁶³ More over, the *Xin Tangshu* claims that "the Khitan could not stand on their own feet, they submitted to the Türks".¹⁶⁴ During this period, the Khitan showed their loyalty to the Tang on several occasions, but these submissions seemed to be in name only.

In the later years of Mochuo, because of his fatuity and tyranny, the Turkish Empire was falling into decline. Some subject tribes, including some western Turkish, Koryō, Tuyuhun and Yusheshi tribes extricated themselves from Turkish control. In the sixth month of 716, during an expedition against the Tiele tribes to the north, Mochuo was killed. Some of the Tiele tribes submitted to the Tang. Because of the Turkish decline, the Khitan led by Shihuo submitted to the Tang together with the Xi. It indicates that the Khitan, who had broke away from the Turkish pressure, had to again rely on the Tang's influence again for protection, in order to survive.¹⁶⁵ However such a smooth relationship between the Khitan and Tang proved short-lived.

The Turkish Mojilian succeeded Mochuo to become Bijia khaghan. Assisted by Dunyugu, who was an old official under Mochuo, the Bijia khaghan readjusted their internal and external policies. Some subject tribes, which submitted to the Tang in the later years of Mochuo, came back to the Turkish Empire, strengthening the power of the Türks. In addition, with the alleviation of their relations with the Tang, the Türks were recovering and becoming relatively stable in following years. Under such a situation, the Khitan political stand tended to waver again. One year after Shihuo died in 717, a long-term internal turmoil happened among the Khitan. A Khitan military chief named Ketuyu was supported and beloved by his people, because of his braveness. Suogu, the pro-

¹⁶² See *JTS* 194. 5168.

¹⁶³ *JTS* 194. 5172.

¹⁶⁴ *XTS* 219. 6170.

¹⁶⁵ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 103.

Chinese chieftain of the Khitan, was jealous, in fear of Ketuyu and plotted to murder him. In 720, Ketuyu attacked Suogu and defeated the allied forces of the Tang and Xi, the supporters of Suogu. Finally, Suogu and the Xi leader were killed, and a Tang general was captured. In the next ten years, Ketuyu enthroned and deposed several supreme chieftains of the Khitan. In 730, Ketuyu was mistreated by a Tang official with rudeness, when he was sent to present tributes to the imperial court. Soon after, he murdered the pro-Chinese Khitan leader Shaogu, and led his people and even forced the Xi tribesmen to submit to the Türks. He then rebelled against the Tang. In the following years, the Khitan had frequently raided the Chinese borders. The Tang response was to launch frequent attacks against the Khitan. The Khitan won and lost alternately. In 733, under the support of the Türks, the Khitan defeated the Tang forces allied with the subdued Xi. Next year, Ketuyu and his puppet supreme chief were killed by another Khitan military chief, Li Guozhe who submitted to the Tang thereafter. These long-lasting internal troubles ended. Although the Khitan were Turkish vassals in this period of time, the relationship between the Khitan and Türks did not always appear smooth. According to the Bilga Khaghan Inscriptions, in 723 and 724 the Türks successively went on expeditions against the Khitan and Xi.¹⁶⁶ Furthermore, the Türks again invaded the Xi and Khitan in 735, but were defeated by the Khitan and Xi led respectively by Nieli and Li Guiguo.¹⁶⁷

In the next ten years, the Second Turkish Empire started to fall into decline, suffering from both internal dissension and external attacks from their subject tribes and the Tang. The containment from the Türks slackened, and the Khitan submitted to the Tang, at least in name.¹⁶⁸ However, there were still some conflicts between the Khitan and Tang, which can be found in the historical materials.¹⁶⁹ This is because the Khitan were infuriated by frequent attacks from a Chinese frontier commander, An Lushan who assaulted the Khitan again and again to gain favor with the Tang court.¹⁷⁰

In 745, the Turkish Baimei khaghan was killed by a leader of the rising Uighurs and the Second Turkish Empire, which had existed for over half a century, collapsed.¹⁷¹ Soon after in the same year, the Khitan led by Li Huaixiu

¹⁶⁶ The Bilga Khaghan Inscriptions in Turkic, translated into Chinese by Geng, Shimin enclosed in Lin, Gan 1988, p. 270.

¹⁶⁷ *ZZTJ* 210. 6813.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. *XTS* 219. 6171.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. *XTS* 219. 6167-6173; *ZZTJ* 214-215. 6805-6886.

¹⁷⁰ See 7.5. of Chapter 7 for details.

¹⁷¹ *XTS* 215. 6055.

submitted to the Tang, even though the conflicts between the Khitan and the Chinese frontier commander still continued.¹⁷²

The impacts of the Türks on the Khitan. From the middle of the 6th Century to the middle of the 8th Century, the Türks had been on the stage of Inner Asian history for about two hundred years. In this period, as overloads on the steppe, their influence on both the steppe tribes and China was extremely important. The neighboring nomadic peoples were always under Turkish deterrent force from the beginning to the end. As Janhunen stated, "The Turkic populations of early mediaeval Mongolia had naturally a direct impact on the evolution of their Mongolic neighbors".¹⁷³ Because of the similar cultural background, the Türks understood the nature of the other nomadic tribes much better than their sedentary counterparts. Therefore, the containing force on their nomadic neighbors ran through the whole course of their two-decade history.

The Khitan, as an independent political power, coexisted with the Türks through the whole course of Turkish history. The political, economic and military influences of the Türks on the Khitan manifested in two different respects. One was containing the Khitan's development. The establishment of the Turkish Empire was based mainly on military conquest. Their attitude towards their subject tribes was only oppression, enslavement and exploitation. The taxes, corvee and military service became heavy burdens on the subject peoples. The Khitan, without exception, were oppressed by the Türks. The incident, when the Khitan killed the Turkish Tutun in 585, could be regarded as the Khitan resistance against the Turkish oppression. The *Xin Tangshu* records, "(At the beginning of the Jieli khaghan's reign period), the Tuli khaghan was appointed to be in charge of the Khitan and Mohe ... Due to his reckless extorting heavy taxes and levies, those subject tribes complained."¹⁷⁴ In addition, the Türks also utilized the Khitan tribesmen as part of their military force in their foreign expansion. Moreover, in the process of the founding and consolidating their political power, the Türks again and again made the Khitan fall victim to their political and economic interests. For examples, as early as the Northern Qi Dynasty (550-557), the Türks forced the Khitan to abandon their homeland and move eastward, for their expansion to the east; and in the Li-Sun rebellion (697-699), the Türks assisted the Tang to attack the Khitan at the rear, rooting a large number of human beings and enormous wealth, for gaining even more economic and political benefits from the Tang court. The long-term suppression from the Türks made it difficult for the Khitan to get a chance to create an autonomous regime. It could be regarded as

¹⁷² Cf. *XTS* 219. 6172.

¹⁷³ Janhunen 1996, p. 137.

¹⁷⁴ *XTS* 215. 6038.

one of external causes, which made the Khitan take as long as five hundred years to rise up. The other was protecting the Khitan from being eliminated by the other stronger political forces. The principle of Khitan foreign policy in their pre-dynastic period was putting themselves under the protection of the Türks and China alternatively in order to survive between their stronger neighbors both on the steppe and in China. Once the central power in China collapsed or they were attacked by China, the Khitan usually sought protection under the Türks. For examples, in the reign period of emperor Yangdi, the Sui Dynasty was in turmoil and the central order in China was going to collapse, the Khitan became Turkish vassals; in the Li-Sun rebellion (696-699), after their revolt was put down by the Tang, the Khitan could not support themselves and submitted to the Türks, for preventing their remnant force from being totally destroyed by the Tang, even though they were also suffered attacks from the Türks; and in Ketuyu's revolt against the Tang, the Khitan submitted to the Türks together with the Xi in 730, and in 733, with the support of the Türks, the Khitan defeated a heavy attack from the Tang troops. Whatever the original intention of the Türks was, their protection and support objectively prevented the Khitan from being eliminated by the other stronger forces. This is one of the external reasons why the Khitan, as relatively weak tribes, were not destroyed by their stronger neighbors during their five hundred-year pre-dynastic histories. Under the protection of a stronger political power, the Khitan's internal social structure and economy slowly developed and their strength gradually increased. It also could be regarded as one of the factors, which made the founding of the Khitan state possible.

In addition to the political, economic and military influences, the compact of the Türks on the Khitan also showed in culture. Some Turkic loanwords are included in the limited Khitanic vocabulary. Most of the Turkic loanwords are political and military terms. According to Wittfogel & Feng, "Among Chi-tan (Khitan) tribal titles ... many have a Turkic-Uighur affinity".¹⁷⁵

6.5. The Khitan and the Uighurs

The rise of the Uighurs. 1. The names and origins of the Uighurs. The Chinese transcription of the Uighurs in the Chinese historical sources could be first found in the *Wei Shu*. In the *Account of Emperor Taizu*, the name of the Uighurs is written as Yuanhe.¹⁷⁶ The *Description of the Uighurs* of the *Xin Tangshu* records, "the Yuanhe were also called Wuhu and Wuhe, and until the Sui Dynasty, they were called Weihe".¹⁷⁷ In the *Description of the Gaoche* of the *Wei Shu*, it is

¹⁷⁵ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 23.

¹⁷⁶ *WS* 1. 23.

¹⁷⁷ *XTS* 217. 6111.

recorded that the Yuanhe was one branch of the Gaoche (also called the Chile) tribes.¹⁷⁸ In the *Sui Shu*, their name is written as Weihe, and they were described as one of the Tiele tribes.¹⁷⁹ In the first half of the Tang Dynasty, the Uighurs were called Huihe. In 788, the Uighur khaghan asked the Tang court to change their name from Huihe to Huigu.¹⁸⁰ From then, they were called Huigu.

As for the origin of the Uighurs, it is recorded in the *Sui Shu*, *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* that the Uighurs were the descendants of the Xiongnu.¹⁸¹ The *Wei Shu*, however, states that the Uighurs were the descendants of the ancient Chidi (the red barbarian),¹⁸² who were a branch of the ancient northern barbarians. The *Description of the Gaoche* of the *Wei Shu* also claims, "their language was almost the same as that of the Xiongnu, and sometimes was slightly different. Somebody said that their ancestors were the maternal nephew of the Xiongnu"¹⁸³. From the above historical records, it can be sure that the Uighurs were of Xiongnu origin and Turkic-speaking people.

From the end of the 3rd to the beginning of the 4th Centuries, the Yuanhe and other Chile tribes, which were moving about in search of pasture between the Selenga River and Tuul River, were under Xianbei control.¹⁸⁴ From the end of the 4th Century to the middle of 5th Century, when the Rouran succeeded the Xianbei to be overloads on the steppe, the Chile tribes became vassals of the Rouran, inhabiting the northwest of the Lulun River (modern Orkhon River).¹⁸⁵ In the Sui Dynasty, the Weihe and some other Tiele tribes resided in the north of the Dule River (modern Tuul River).¹⁸⁶ With the rise of the Türks, they submitted to the eastern Türks. Under Turkish control, the Tiele tribes were forced to pay taxes and go on expeditions quite often.¹⁸⁷ In 605, the Turkish Chuluo khaghan attacked the Tiele tribes, extorting heavy taxes and properties. In order to avoid complaints from the Tiele tribes, the Türks killed several hundred chiefs of the Tiele tribes. So the Weihe rebelled and broke away from the Türks together with some other Tiele tribes, the Pugu, Tongluo and Bayegu. From then on, they had their own

¹⁷⁸ *WS* 103. 2307.

¹⁷⁹ *SS* 84. 1879.

¹⁸⁰ *XTS* 217. 6124.

¹⁸¹ *SS* 84. 1879; *JTS* 195. 5195; *XTS* 217. 6124.

¹⁸² *Wei Shu* vol. 103, p. 2307.

¹⁸³ *Idem*.

¹⁸⁴ The Compilation Group of *History of the Ethnic Relations among the Northern Minorities of China*, 1987, p. 131.

¹⁸⁵ *WS* 103. 2308.

¹⁸⁶ *SS* 84. 1879.

¹⁸⁷ *Idem*. 1880.

Sijin (a Turkish official title), becoming independent, and began to be called Huihe.¹⁸⁸

2. The composition of the Uighur confederation. According to the *Jiu Tangshu*, the Uighur tribal confederation originally was composed of the following nine tribes or nine surnames: the Yaoluoge, which the Uighur khaghans were drawn from, Huduoqe, Duoluowu, Mogexiqi, Awudi, Gesa, Huwasu, Yaowuge and Xiyewu. Later, the other two conquered the Tiele tribes, the Baximi and Geluolu then were absorbed into the Uighur tribal confederation, so there were eleven tribes all together.¹⁸⁹

In the *Tang Huiyao*, however, the composition of the Uighurs is completely different from that in the *Jiu Tangshu*, they were: the Huihe, Pugu, Hun, Bayegu, Tongluo, Sijie, Qibi, Abusi and Gulunwugu. The *Tang Huiyao* explains further about the composition of the Uighurs. It states that the first seven tribes appeared at the beginning of the Tang Dynasty, and the latter two appeared after the period of Tianbao (742-756).¹⁹⁰

Based upon the records in the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Tang Huiyao*, the *Xin Tangshu* accepts the composition of the Uighurs recorded in the *Jiu Tangshu*, and claims after describes the first nine original Uighur tribes that are the same as in the *Jiu Tangshu*, "The Yaoluoge was a surname of the Huihe. The Pugu, Hun, Bayegu, Tongluo, Sijie and Qibi were the same kind of people as the Yaoluoge, so that they were not listed separately in the above counted numbers"¹⁹¹. In my understanding of the above statement in the *Xin Tangshu*, it is more likely that the Pugu, Hun, Bayegu, Tongluo, Sijie and Qibi were some sub-tribes under the Yaoluoge. So that the first seven tribes, including the Huihe itself, listed in the *Tang Huiyao* probably were sub-tribes of the Yaoluoge tribe, or in other words they all had a surname of the Yaoluoge. Therefore, a proposal can be made as follows: The Huihe originally was a name of a sub-tribe under the Yaoluoge. Later, when the Uighur tribal confederation was established, it was used as a name of the confederation, for the khaghans were drawn from the tribe, which the Huihe represented.

3. The rise of the Uighurs. Throughout more than a century (from the beginning of the 7th Century to the beginning of the 8th Century) of development, the Uighurs were becoming more powerful and united. Probably, the formation of the Uighur tribal confederation under the name of Huihe was occurred in this period. In 716, the Turkish khaghan Mochuo was killed by the Bayegu, which was one of

¹⁸⁸ *Idem.* 1880; *XTS* 217. 6111.

¹⁸⁹ *JTS* 195. 5198.

¹⁹⁰ *THY* 98. 1744.

¹⁹¹ *XTS* 217. 6114.

the Uighur tribes.¹⁹² The Turkish Empire began to be on the decline afterward. In the next three decades, endless internal disputes occurred among the Turkish *elite*, and frequent revolts of the oppressed peoples broke out in the Turkish Empire. Taking advantage of the internal disorder with the Türks, the Uighurs frequently attacked the Türks in alliance with the Chinese Tang Dynasty. Along with the successful external campaigns, their internal power gradually grew in strength. In 744, a Uighur leader named Guli Peiluo declared himself the Uighur khaghan, and it was a sign that the Uighur Empire was established. This newly built empire got support from the Tang court. Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty appointed him the Prince of Fengyi (Offering Righteousness). Guli Peiluo advanced south, occupied the old land of the Türks. Under such a situation favored the Uighurs and more and more Tiele tribes were absorbed into the Uighur Empire. Later, Guli Peiluo was appointed by the Tang emperor Huairan (Cherishing Benevolence) khaghan. In 745, the Turkish Baimei khaghan was killed by Guli Peiluo. The Turkish Empire collapsed. The Uighurs succeeded the Türks to become the dominant force on the steppe in the next century. At the beginning of their imperial time, the Uighur territory got further extended, reaching the Shiwei to the east, the Altai Mountains to the west, the Lake Baikal to the north and the northern border of China Proper to the South that overlooked China.¹⁹³

With the establishment and development of the Uighur Empire, the Khitan, as a comparatively small and weak political force in Manchuria, were inevitably influenced by the Uighurs in various aspects. Some of Uighur influence even continued after the dissolution of the Uighur Empire.

The Khitan relations with the Uighurs. The Chinese sources concerning the relationship between the pre-dynastic Khitan and Uighurs are extremely limited. In my opinion there might be two reasons. For the first is that the Tang court found it difficult to get the information from the Khitan. After the An-Shi Rebellion (755-763), the two Chinese prefectures, Yingzhou and Youzhou (which was located in the northeastern frontier of China for overseeing the Khitan and other Manchurian barbarians), had fallen into the hands of the frontier separatist forces that were quite independent of the central government. Since the Tang court lost its control over this region, connections between the Tang court and Khitan had almost been suspended. The information about the Khitan, therefore, could not reach the Tang court. Consequently, the records on the Khitan after the An-Shi Rebellion are much fewer than before. Most of this period corresponded to the Uighur dynastic time. This is why we can only get very limited information about the relations between the Khitan and Uighurs from the Chinese historical

¹⁹² *Idem* 215. 6049.

¹⁹³ *Idem* 217. 6114-6115.

sources. The second is the bias towards the barbarian peoples held by the Confucian scholars who compiled the histories. In dealing with foreign relations, the most concern of the traditional Chinese historians is the relations between the Chinese court and the barbarians, but not the relations between one barbarian people and the others. Therefore, we can get almost nothing about the Uighur relations with the Khitan from the records on the Uighurs, even though there are quite long descriptions of the Uighurs in both the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu*, because of the significant role the Uighurs played in the latter half of the Tang Dynasty.

Nevertheless, by better understanding the available records concerning the relations between the Khitan and Uighurs; and by comprehensive analyses on the international situation in this same period from the middle of the 8th Century to the middle of the 9th Century, a general view of the Khitan relations with the Uighurs can be elicited with the help of the other historical material.

1. The situation of the Khitan and their relations with the Uighurs. From the 730s to the 740s, the social organization of the Khitan underwent a crucial reform. This reform meant the end of the Dahe confederation and the establishment of a more united and sophisticated confederation led by the Yaonian family. This marks the revival of the Khitan. The *Liao Shi* records:

蕭韓家奴有言，先世遙輦可汗汪之後，國祚中絕，自夷離婁雅里立阻午可汗，大位始定。¹⁹⁴

Xiao Han Jianu said, after the Yaonian Wa Khaghan , (the Khitan) fell into decline. Since the Yilijin (title of the Khitan military chief) named Yali (identical to Nieli) enthroned the Zuwu khaghan, the position of leadership (of imperial family of the Khitan Liao State) had been established for the first time.

The *Liao Shi* also claims:

阻午可汗析為二十部，契丹始大。¹⁹⁵

The Zuwu khaghan divided (the Khitan) into twenty tribes, and the Khitan became powerful for the first time.

In 745, the Khitan, who were led by Huaixiu (the Zuwu khaghan), submitted to the Tang. Huaixiu died in the same year. Coincidentally it was earlier in this year that the Uighurs killed the Turkish Baimei khaghan, taking the place of the Türks to become the overlords on the steppe. During the period of the Yaonian confederation, the Khitan became more and more engaged in their own internal development.

¹⁹⁴ *Idem.* 956.

¹⁹⁵ *Idem* 32. 376.

During the period from 745 to 755, the newly established Yaonian confederation was frequently suffered of the attacks and harassment from An Lushan, a frontier commander who succeeded in gaining favor with the Tang court. The Khitan sustained heavy losses. However, we could not find any record that the Khitan asked for help from the Uighurs in the Chinese historical sources. This probably suggests that Uighur influence had not yet reached the Khitan in this period.

In the duration of the An-Shi Rebellion from 755 till 763, with the exception of occasional tributary activities, there is no information about the Khitan found in the Chinese historical materials. This is not only because the information of the Khitan could not reach the Tang court, but also probably because the Khitan were not involved in the revolt and did not take this opportunity to raid the Chinese border regions like the Xi did in this period.

It could be inferred that Uighur control over the Khitan started after the An-Shi Rebellion. After the revolt erupted, the central government of the Tang was in a predicament, losing the control of Yingzhou and Youzhou, the northeastern frontier of China where the government offices of military governors were set originally to oversee the Khitan and other Manchurian barbarians. The central order of China was falling into decline. The Tang court had no ambition to be engaged in controlling the Khitan any longer. The Khitan, who almost always relied on one of the strong neighboring forces both in China and on the steppe throughout their pre-dynastic history, turned to accepted the suzerainty of the Uighurs.

The two pieces of records in *Materials* {49} are supposed to be the only available historical material, which directly provides some information on the Khitan-Uighur relations.

From the records in *Materials* {49}, it can be seen that the Uighur suzerainty over the Khitan manifested mainly in two respects, political governing and economic exploitation. In politics, using the Uighur seal meant that the Khitan were in a subordinate position to the Uighurs. This kind of political relationship, however, was supposed to be in name only, to a certain extent. Unlike their Chinese counterpart, the Uighurs neither interfered the enthronement and the deposition of the Khitan chief, nor forced the Khitan tribesmen to become involved in their military campaigns, because economic benefits were the Uighurs' main concern. On the other hand, the Uighur economic oppression of the Khitan seemed relatively heavy. They extorted taxes and tributes from the Khitan by compulsory means. Some hundreds of Uighur commissioners were sent to urge the Khitan and Xi to pay taxes and annual tributes. It is recorded in the *Zizhi Tongjian* that there were over eight hundred Uighur commissioners, who were in the Khitan and Xi,

were killed by a Tang military governor after the dissolution of the Uighurs.¹⁹⁶ However, Uighur control over the Khitan, in general, was relatively loose with little interference in their internal affairs. State building of the Uighurs relied on armed forces, so that grabbing properties was the principle concern of their foreign relations. In view of this, the richly endowed China to the south had been their main focus all along. Besides, in the latter part of their empire, the Uighurs were often involved in war with the Tibetans, their major threat from the west. The Khitan to the east were always their secondary concern in many different respects. Uighur control over the Khitan, therefore, was comparatively lax. There were no military campaign on the Khitan and no requisition of military force from the Khitan, which were made by the Uighurs, in the historical sources. This provided the Khitan with a relatively peaceful external environment. Under such an environment, the Khitan increased rapidly in their strength.

The Khitan-Uighur relations also showed in some other respects, for instant, the inter-marriage relations. The *Liao Shi* records:

儀坤州,啟聖軍,節度.本契丹右大部地.應天皇后建州.回鶻糯思居之.至四世孫容我梅里,生應天皇后述律氏,適太祖.¹⁹⁷

The Yikun prefecture, in which the Qisheng Army (was set there under the control of a military governor was located, was originally the land of the Khitan Right Big Tribe. An Uighur man named Nuosi lived there. His four-generation grandson named Rongwo Meili. (Rongwo Meili) begot empress Yingtian. Empress Yingtian was from the Shulü family, and was married to emperor Taizu.

The above record indicates that emperor Taizu's wife had a consanguineous relation with the Uighurs; and the empress's ancestor Nuosi (who was an Uighur man) lived in the territory of the Khitan Right Big Tribe as early as five generations before emperor Taizu's time (872-927). Thus it can be seen that an inter-marriage relationship existed between the Khitan royal family and the Uighurs who were members of the Shulü clan. However, there are no historical data that can provide us any information about when such relations started. According to Xiang Nan & Yang Ruowei's study, the inter-marriage relation between the Yelü, the imperial family, and the Shulü clan (later called Xiao), which the empress came from, might have started in the time of Yizu who was believed by the *Liao Shi* emperor Taizu's four-generation ancestor.¹⁹⁸ It can be calculated that the time of Yizu was probably at the end of the 8th Century.¹⁹⁹ Since there were some Uighur people who in the Shulü clan, and there were also

¹⁹⁶ ZZTJ 246. 7967.

¹⁹⁷ LS 37. 446.

¹⁹⁸ Xiang, Nan & Yang, Ruowui 1980, p. 148.

¹⁹⁹ Shu, Fen 1984, p. 88.

some Uighur people who had lived in the Khitan territory for five generations before emperor Taizu's time, it can be tentatively assumed that the inter-marriage relation between the Khitan and Uighurs probably began in the pre-dynastic period of the Khitan, even though no more evidence can be provided. Furthermore, it could be also assumed that such an inter-marriage relation not only existed between the Khitan royal family and a certain Uighur lineage, but also among common tribal people. The significance of the result of this relationship is described by Chen Shu, "the people, who came from the Xiao lineage, occupied half of the Liao ruling class throughout the dynastic period. Some of them were of Uighur origin. This is a very important event in the Khitan history, to which no enough attention has been paid for ages".²⁰⁰

Moreover, with a higher degree of civilization, Uighur influence upon the Khitan continued after the Uighur Empire collapsed, and even in the Khitan dynastic time, even though the Uighurs became vassals of the Khitan after the Khitan Empire was established. One example is the creation of the Khitan Small Script. As recorded in the *Liao Shi*:

迭刺, ... 性敏給 ... 回鶻使至, 無能通其語者. 太后謂太祖曰, "迭刺聰明可使". 遣迓之. 相從二旬, 能習其言及書. 因制契丹小字, 數少而該貫.²⁰¹

Diela, ... was clever in nature ... When the Uighur emissaries came (to the court), there was nobody who could understand their language. The empress dowager said to emperor Taizu, "Diela is clever. He can be sent (to meet them)". (Diela) was then sent to meet (the emissary). After twenty days being with (the emissary), (Diela) was able to learn both their spoken and written languages. Thus (he) created the Khitan Small Script that was fewer in number, but covered everything.

The above record manifested the Khitan Small Script was created by consulting the Uighur language. Added weight is given to this statement by some modern scholars. Wittfogel & Feng Chia-shen believes that the Sogdian pattern of phonetic script, which was adapted by the Uighur, served as a model when the Khitan Small Scripts were created.²⁰² In addition, the Japanese Scholar Yamaji Hiroaki maintains that the method of the Uighur phonetic spelling was used for reference in creating the Khitan Small Script.²⁰³ This assertion is accepted by Qinggertai *et al.* in their work *Studies on the Khitan Small Script*.²⁰⁴ Although this issue still remains controversial, it is more likely that the creation of the Khitan Small Script more or less related from Uighur influence.

²⁰⁰ Chen, Shu 1948, p. 34.

²⁰¹ *LS* 64. 967-969.

²⁰² Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 243. note. 23; Janhunen 1996, p. 144.

²⁰³ Cf. Qinggertai *et al.* 1985, p. 39.

²⁰⁴ Qinggertai *et al.* 1985, p. 39.

Another example is the setting up of a Uighur Camp in the Liao Supreme Capital. As recorded in the *Liao Shi*:

南門之東回鶻營，回鶻商販留居上京，置營居之。²⁰⁵

There was a Uighur Camp in the east of the southern gate (of the Supreme Capital). It was set for settling the Uighur merchants who left in the Supreme Capital.

It could be assumed that Uighur influence upon the Khitan commerce in their dynastic period.

Besides, Uighur influence was also showed in Khitan agriculture, particularly in cultivation skills. It is recorded that the Khitan learned to plant watermelon and a kind of long pea that was called "Uighur pea" from the Uighurs.²⁰⁶

2. The situation of China and the Khitan relations with the Tang Dynasty.

During emperor Xuanzong's reign (713-755), the frontier situation turned more difficult for China. In the north, the eastern Türks, who had dominated the whole Mongolian steppe, were almost always hostile to China; in the northeast, the Khitan and Xi were getting more and more powerful, seriously threatening the northeastern frontier of China; in the southwest, both the Tibetan Tufan which grew into a powerful united kingdom and embarked on aggressive expansions, and Nanzhao who founded a native kingdom in present Yunnan Province, lying in between the Tufan and China Proper, remained actively hostile towards China. Such a crucial situation made it necessary for the Tang court to consolidate their frontier defense. In 742, ten military governors were set along the Chinese frontier in all directions by the Tang court for defense those troublesome neighbors. This marks a critical change in the defending system of the Tang. From then on, the number of soldiers of the frontier military force greatly surpassed that of the central government. In addition, the limits of power of the frontier military governors were increasing. After the An-Shi Rebellion was put down, the situation became even worse. In order to crush the revolt by using the frontier military force, the Tang court gave more and more rights to the military governors. This made the regional separatist forces stronger and stronger. They even no longer had to pay taxes to the central government. From then, the frontier regions under the military governors became independent of and sometimes hostile to the central government of the Tang. These hereditary military governors took control of not only the military force, but also the political, economic and financial affairs of their own regions. From this time onward, the Tang Dynasty was actually no longer a centralized empire, but was torn apart by a central government, which was still important in its influence on the neighboring peoples,

²⁰⁵ *LS* 37. 441.

²⁰⁶ *QDGZ* 25. 238 & 27. 256.

and powerful frontier separatist regimes. It manifested a general trend of history that the centralization of authority was falling into decline, while the regional separatist forces were rising up in China.

Under such circumstances, the relationship between the Khitan and China could be divided into two parts: one is the Khitan relation with the Tang court, while the other is with the regional military governors neighboring upon the Khitan territory.

Although under Uighur control, the Khitan connection with the Tang court never stopped. According to the *Xin Tangshu* cited in *Materials* {47}, the Khitan chieftains went to pay homage and present tributes to the Tang court almost every year during the period from 762 to 839, which roughly correspond to the Uighur imperial time (745-840). Furthermore, according to the *Cefu Yuanguai*, the times that the Khitan envoys paid homage and present tributes to the Tang court even more frequently during this period than in the period of Zhenguan, the most prosperous times in the Tang Dynasty.²⁰⁷ On the other hand, the Khitan relations with the frontier military governors were also kept smooth. As recorded in the *Xin Tangshu*, from the Hide period (756-758) onward, the frontier military governors concentrated on their internal development and self-defense, and no longer made troubles beyond the frontier. As a result, the Khitan and Xi rarely raided the Tang borders. See also *Materials* {47}.

It can be seen that the Khitan not only became vassals of the Uighurs, but also contemporaneously pledged their allegiance to the Tang court during this period. This obviously indicates a critical change in the Khitan foreign policy.

3. Re-adjustment of the Khitan foreign policy. The foreign policy, which alternatively attached themselves to the centralized government in China and the dominant force on the steppe, was practiced by the Khitan from the very beginning of their political history in the late 4th Century until the second Turkish Empire collapsed in 745. Under such a policy, the Khitan survived between two strong political powers both in China and on the steppe by always seeking protection from one of the strong powers, when they were attacked by the other. While their development in various respects, however, was extremely slow, even though sometimes they appeared formidably aggressive. During the period of Uighur control, however, it can be easily seen that the Khitan foreign policy was somewhat different from ever before.

After establishment of the Yaonian confederation, the Khitan became more united and politically more stable. A presumption could be tentatively made that the Khitan society was undergoing a critical reform. They firstly had to recover their losses caused by a succession of attacks initiated by An Lushan before the

²⁰⁷ *CFYG* 970-976. 11397-11466.

An-Shi Rebellion, and then to increase their own strength for further development, "starting the process of state building that would lay the groundwork for a new and powerful dynasty".²⁰⁸ The leaders of the Yaonian confederation appeared more engaged in their internal development, particularly the economy. The *Liao Shi* provides some information of emperor Taizu Abaoji's ancestors encouraging productive activities.²⁰⁹ This made it necessary for the Khitan to pursue a peaceful external environment. It is assumed that a more conservative policy might have been practiced by the Khitan in dealing with their stronger neighbors, the Tang China and the Uighurs, in this period. In this framework, the Khitan foreign policy switched to another aspect that pledged allegiance to both China and the Uighurs, to seek political protection from the two stronger powers. They also tried to stop hostilities to any of their neighbors, thus avoiding any military conflict, which could waste both their human and natural resources. In practicing this foreign policy, the Khitan tried to search for a diplomatic balance between its relations with both China and the Uighurs. This balance made it possible for the Khitan to gain a peaceful external environment to develop their internal social structure and economic basis, in preparation for building up a political autonomy in the future.

Nevertheless, there is no denying the fact that the specific political situations of both China and the Uighurs made such a Khitan foreign policy possible to carry out. After the An-Shi Rebellion was crushed, the Tang court fell into a difficult position. Domestically, the financial difficulties, political corruption in the ruling class and succession of internal revolts drove the central government into desperation. Abroad, foreign invasions from the troublesome Tuban and Nanzhao in the southwestern frontier and rapacious extortion by the Uighurs made the Tang Dynasty vulnerable to rival neighbors. Meanwhile, the Uighurs were involved in assisting the weakening Tang Dynasty to put down internal revolts and defeat foreign attacks, for exploiting Chinese wealth to finance their nomadic empire. Neither China nor the Uighurs proved to have enough surplus energy to take other neighboring forces into their political account. Therefore, the Khitan's conservative foreign policy was undoubtedly a most welcome favor for both China and the Uighurs. As a result, there was no political or military conflict between the Khitan and China or the Uighurs can be found in the historical records during this period.

The readjusted Khitan foreign policy made the Khitan-Uighur relationship more favorable to the Khitan (compared with the Khitan relations with other dominate powers on the steppe under the former foreign policy) than ever before.

²⁰⁸ Barfield 1989, p. 169.

²⁰⁹ *LS* 46. 730 & 59. 923-924.

Under the former Khitan foreign policy of alternatively allying with China or the steppe, "the Khitans' political fate was largely determined by their far more powerful neighbors and by the ever-changing balance of power between the successive regimes ruling north China, on the one hand, and belligerent tribal neighbors to the north, northeast and northwest, on the other".²¹⁰ Striving for existence between the two stronger powers both in China and on the steppe, the Khitan almost always fell victim to the expansionary competition between these two powers, suffering from disastrous attacks from one side while gaining protection from the other. Under the readjusted foreign policy, the Khitan nominally subordinated to both the Tang court and Uighurs, contributing taxes and tributes to both, particularly the Uighurs, and in return they got dual-protection from both sides. In addition, the balance between the relations with the Tang and with the Uighurs, which were established under the readjusted Khitan foreign policy, provided a relatively peaceful external environment for the Khitan. This made it possible for the Khitan to speed up their internal development by absorbing the more advanced culture from both China and the Uighurs.

This period, when the readjusted Khitan foreign policy was carried out, could be reasonably regarded as the most important period in the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan, as well as a critical developing period, which prepared for the founding of a powerful dynasty. Moreover, the practice and consequence of the Khitan conservative policy can be easily seen in this period.

6.6. The Khitan and Ethnic Chinese

As a neighboring political force in the northeast of China, the Khitan inevitably interacted with and were influenced by China. The Khitan-China relationship started to develop, as soon as the Khitan became an independent political force in 388. This relationship ran through the whole historical course of the Khitan from the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534) to the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127). After the Khitan's separation from the Kumo Xi in 388 and until their founding of an imperial state in 907, there was a five hundred and twenty-eight year period. During such a long period, as a strong political power with superior sedentary civilization to the south of the Khitan, China and its relations with the neighboring peoples influenced the Khitan at each stage of their development to varying degrees. In particular around Abaoji's founding of an imperial state, Chinese culture, ideology and political institutions profoundly affected the Khitan *elite* and their whole society. This could be regarded as the most important external factor of the rise of the Khitan. In this chapter I shall attempt to find the outcome of this relationship and its influence upon the Khitan at each stage of their development,

²¹⁰ Twitchett & Tietze. In Franke & Twitchett, ed., 1994, p. 47.

and then to provide some partial explanations to those questions raised about the Khitan's rise at that specific time namely the beginning of the 10th Century.

In the period from the Northern Wei to Sui. 1. The Khitan relations with the Northern Wei. This part has been discussed in 6.1. of Chapter 6.

2. The Khitan relations with the Northern Qi. In the middle of the 6th Century, the Northern Wei broke up in the south, while the Rouran fell into decline in the north. The outside pressure on the Khitan was thus reduced. In such a situation and based on their considerable strength that had accumulated during the Northern Wei period under the appeasement policy of the Northern Wei, the Khitan showed their hostility to China. On the other hand, contrary to the sinified Northern Wei, the Northern Qi, which was founded by the Xianbei nobles with strong steppe tradition, carried out a comparatively aggressive policy towards the Khitan. As a result, the Khitan-Northern Qi relationship appeared obviously discordant. However, with the rise of the Türks, who succeeded the Rouran to become overlords on the steppe soon after, the political situation turned even more unfavorable to the Khitan.

According to the *Wei Shu*, the Khitan raided the Chinese borders in the ninth month of 553. The response of the Northern Qi was to launch a succession of retaliatory attacks on the Khitan tribes, capturing over a hundred thousand people and driving off a great number of their livestock. Later, during the process of the Turkish aggressive foreign expansion to the east, the Khitan again were victims. Forced by the Turkish threat and in desperation some Khitan tribes including the Chufu tribe sought refuge with the Koguryō (Gaogouli) in 556.²¹¹ The aggressive foreign policy of the Northern Qi and the hostile attitude of the Khitan towards China, together with the Turkish threat, forced the Khitan into an extremely difficult position. Fortunately, the Koguryō provided protection for the Khitan, preventing them from being eliminated by both China and the Türks.

3. The Khitan Relations with the Sui. In the following couple of decades, after the Khitan were utterly defeated by the Northern Qi and being intimidated by Turkish expansion, the Khitan tribes were in a fragmented situation. Some of them paid allegiance to the Koguryō while others became vassals of the Türks. Others were under the control of Gao Baoning, a Chinese frontier official who had governed Yingzhou (the border area near the Khitan territory), for a long time from the Northern Qi to the beginning of the Sui.

Due to his long-term control of the northeastern frontier territory, the former Qi official Gao Baoning maintained close relationship with the Türks and some western Manchurian tribal peoples. The *Sui Shu* claims, "(Gao Baoning) won

²¹¹ *BS* 94. 3128.

support from both the Han Chinese and Barbarians".²¹² After the Northern Zhou (557-581) destroyed the Northern Qi in 577 and when Gao Baoning revolted against the Northern Zhou, the Khitan together with the Mohe tribes were in an alliance with him. In 582, two years after the founding of the Sui Dynasty, Gao Baoning again rose in rebellion against the Sui in an alliance with the Türks. The Sui response was to launch a military attack on him (the long-term hostile frontier governor) in the next year.²¹³ Under the Sui military pressure, Gao Baoning asked for Turkish support to resist the Sui troops. However, when the Turkish support did not come for unknown reason, the Khitan and Mohe again provided aid to Gao Baoning. Finally Gao Baoning fled to the Khitan for shelter at his dead end.²¹⁴ The above two examples obviously show that the Khitan had been under Gao Baoning's long-term control, being manipulated and used as a military force by this frontier governor.

After having eliminated Gao Baoning's influence, the Sui got control of Yingzhou and the border area was brought under its jurisdiction. It was a sign that the Sui political influence had already reached Manchuria. For the rest of the Sui period, the Khitan tribes respectively submitted to the Sui successively.

Nevertheless, the Khitan-China relationship shifted with the ever-changing international situation in the Sui period (581-618). In the first two years of the Sui period, the Türks under Shabolue, were at the height of their power and appeared quite aggressive towards China. They mounted a series of large-scale raids on the Chinese borders, because their subsidies, which had been paid by the Northern Zhou state, were cut off by emperor Sui Wendi who destroyed the Northern Zhou and united north China. During these years, the Manchurian tribes including the Khitan were terrorized by the Turkish deterrent force. In 583, the Türks split into hostile eastern and western parts. This was contemporaneous with the Sui's taking control of Yingzhou. It meant that the Turkish strength was somewhat reduced while the Sui external influence was greatly stretched. In this situation, a leader of the temporarily formed Khitan tribal confederation led the chieftains under him to pay homage to the Sui in 584.²¹⁵ Next year, a Khitan chief named Duomi sent envoys to pay tributes to the Sui²¹⁶, and asked to allow them to move back to their old land.²¹⁷ Emperor Wendi agreed to their request.²¹⁸ The so-called "old land" means the Khitan's homeland, which was located in the modern Laoha River

²¹² *SS* 39. 1148.

²¹³ *Idem* 84. 1865.

²¹⁴ *Idem* 39. 1148.

²¹⁵ *Idem* 84. 1881.

²¹⁶ *Idem* 1. 22.

²¹⁷ Mastui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 96.

²¹⁸ *SS* 84. 1881.

valley. While the Khitan suffered from both the Northern Qi and Turkish treats, their tribes became scattered and fled, most likely moving from their homeland to the north or to the east. Up to 585, some of the Khitan tribes moved back successively to their home hand. In 586, after having suffered attacks from both their Turkish rivals from the west and the Khitan from the east, the eastern Türks submitted to the Sui to seek China's aid.²¹⁹ It is more likely that some Khitan tribes under Turkish control followed the Türks in accepting the Sui's superiority, even though there is not any record about it. In 589, the Sui destroyed the Chen state in the south, incorporating south China into the Sui Empire. This strongly shocked its barbarian neighbors. For fear of a Sui invasion, the Koryö (Gaoli) were immersed themselves in organizing a military force, hoarding grain and formulating a strategy of defense.²²⁰ Using this advantage, the Chufu and other Khitan tribes, which had been under the protection of the Koryö since the Northern Qi period, broke away from the Koryö control and attached themselves to China. These Khitan tribes were settled by the Sui in the north of the Kexi Najie (modern Laoha River),²²¹ their old land. At the end of Kaihuang period (581-600), some Khitan tribes defected from the Türks and surrendered their 4000 families to the Sui. Since the Türks-China alliance had just been established, the Sui was afraid of displeasing the Türks if it accepted the Khitan submission. Using diplomatic means, emperor Gaozu ordered the supply to the Khitan of some grain products, and let them remain under Turkish control. The Khitan tribes, however, resolutely refused to be Turkish vassals any longer for fear of Turkish oppression.²²² It is more likely that the Sui finally accepted the submission of this part of Khitan tribes, and also settled them in the border area south of their old land in the modern Laoha River basin. Later, they migrated northward to their old land in pursuit of water and grass.

Nevertheless, the Khitan-Sui relationship was not always smooth. In 605, the Khitan mounted a large-scale of raid on Yingzhou, the northeastern frontier garrison of China. Soon after they were utterly defeated by the Sui allied with the Türks, and sustained heavy losses.²²³ The causes of such hostile behaviors need to be carefully taken into account. First of all, until the turn of the 7th Century, almost all scattered Khitan tribes successively moved back to their old homeland, and somehow assembled together. Thus, the Khitan strength was possibly gathered and was reinforced. As the *Sui Shu* records, see *Materials* {17,20,21} for details. Secondly, also based on the condition that the scattered Khitan tribes

²¹⁹ *Idem.* 1869.

²²⁰ *Idem* 81. 1815.

²²¹ *Idem* 84. 1881.

²²² *Idem.* 1881-1882.

²²³ *JTS* 75. 2631-2632.

successively moved back to their old homeland, a temporary tribal confederation had probably formed again. It is likely that this temporary tribal confederation was composed of ten tribes as mentioned in above record in the *Sui Shu*. The temporary leader of this confederation might have needed to increase his power and influence by raiding the Chinese borders to extort Chinese products. Moreover the larger military organization certainly needed more financial support, which could only gain from China by either peaceful or military means. When peaceful means were impossible, they conducted war against China. Thirdly, since the Sui ruling class was composed of the "Xianbeilized" Chinese *elite* and the Sinified Xianbei nobles, "their values, habits, behavior, and policy all display a strong steppe influence."²²⁴ Therefore, it was completely different from that of the Northern Qi and Northern Zhou. The foreign policy of the strong and united Sui was unfavorable to the nomadic peoples. It was not using Chinese properties to buy border peace but aggressively launching attacks on them when border crises happened. Under such a policy, the subsidies paid by the Northern Qi and Northern Zhou to the Türks were immediately stopped after the Sui united north China. As a result, the Türks raided the Chinese borders more frequently in the beginning years of the Sui. It can be imagined that the Sui attitude towards the Khitan would be similar. According to the *Wei Shu*, *Sui Shu* and *Xin Tangshu*, the Khitan received considerably less bestowals or subsidies from the Sui than from the Northern Wei.²²⁵ In addition, the border market probably was also restricted. Under such circumstances, it is likely the Khitan desire for Chinese products could not be met by peaceful means, so that war was inevitable.

In 611, the Khitan leader again sent envoys to pay tributes to the Sui court.²²⁶ However, the international situation had changed since the pro-Chinese Turkish khaghan died and had been succeeded by his son, titled Shibi khaghan, in 605. Under Shibi, the Türks gradually grew further in strength. The Sui again carried out the sowing-discord policy, which was intended to weaken the Türks by disintegrating them. This made the Türks turn to a more hostile attitude towards China, posing a great threat. Furthermore, the failures in three campaigns against the Koryŏ (613-615) caused the Sui fall into both internal and external difficulties, lost both internal and external supports. Added to this was the rise of the local separatist regimes in China causing the end of the Sui. Simultaneously the Türks were getting even more powerful, because numerous Chinese refugees fled to the steppe for shelter; and the Chinese separatist regimes vied with each other in pledging allegiance to the Türks. Thus, the balance of power shifted in favor of

²²⁴ Barfield 1989, p. 140.

²²⁵ Cf. *WS* 100. 2223-2224; *SS* 84. 1882-1883; *XTS* 219. 6167-6176.

²²⁶ *BS* 94. 3128-3129.

the Türks. Under such conditions, the Khitan again became Turkish vassals at the end of the Sui Dynasty.

The influence of the Khitan-Sui relationship on Khitan development can be seen in following two different respects: On the one hand, the general strategy of the Sui foreign policy, following the traditions of Chinese diplomacy, was "allying with those who are far away while attacking those who are close".²²⁷ Throughout the whole period of the Sui Dynasty, the Türks were the major concern of the Sui foreign policy. The Khitan, who were comparatively weak and in a fragmentary situation, therefore, were just a secondary consideration. Under this strategy and with some other ideological reasons, the Sui policy towards the Khitan was to welcome their submission and to keep peaceful relationship with them, for the Sui needed to use the Khitan as an ally to attack the much stronger Türks in case of war-crisis. Therefore, the Khitan-Sui relationship remained smooth in the first two thirds of the Sui period before 605. During this period, with the successive submission of the Khitan tribes to the Sui court, the originally scattered Khitan tribes gradually assembled together in their old homeland in the modern Laoha River basin. Under such a condition, a temporary tribal confederation was possible to be formed when they dealt with external affairs. The Khitan, therefore, became more stable and cohesive, having accumulated a considerably powerful strength. On the other hand, as founders of a united and powerful dynasty and even with strong steppe tradition inherited from previous foreign dynasties, the Sui *elite* treated the barbarian peoples, particularly the northeast tribes, with a more aggressive policy initiated by emperor Gaozu.²²⁸ In this policy, offering bestowals and subsidies was regarded as negative means in dealing with the barbarians. What they needed was "*weifu* (awing the barbarians into obedience by prestige)" or military conquest. Since there were almost no matrimonial links, frontier trade, and there were much less bestowals or subsidies the Khitan received as recorded in the historical sources, it is likely that a meaningful tributary system probably was not fully established in the Khitan-China relationship during the Sui times. As a result of this policy, a military conflict erupted between the Khitan and China in 605, and ended in heavy losses suffered by the Khitan. The strength, which the Khitan had gradually accumulated in the previous two decades, was greatly weakened. Therefore, the process of the Khitan development was again frustrated by the aggressive policies of the both sides towards one another.

In the period of the Tang Dynasty. The relationship between the Khitan and Tang China was expressed broadly in various aspects including political,

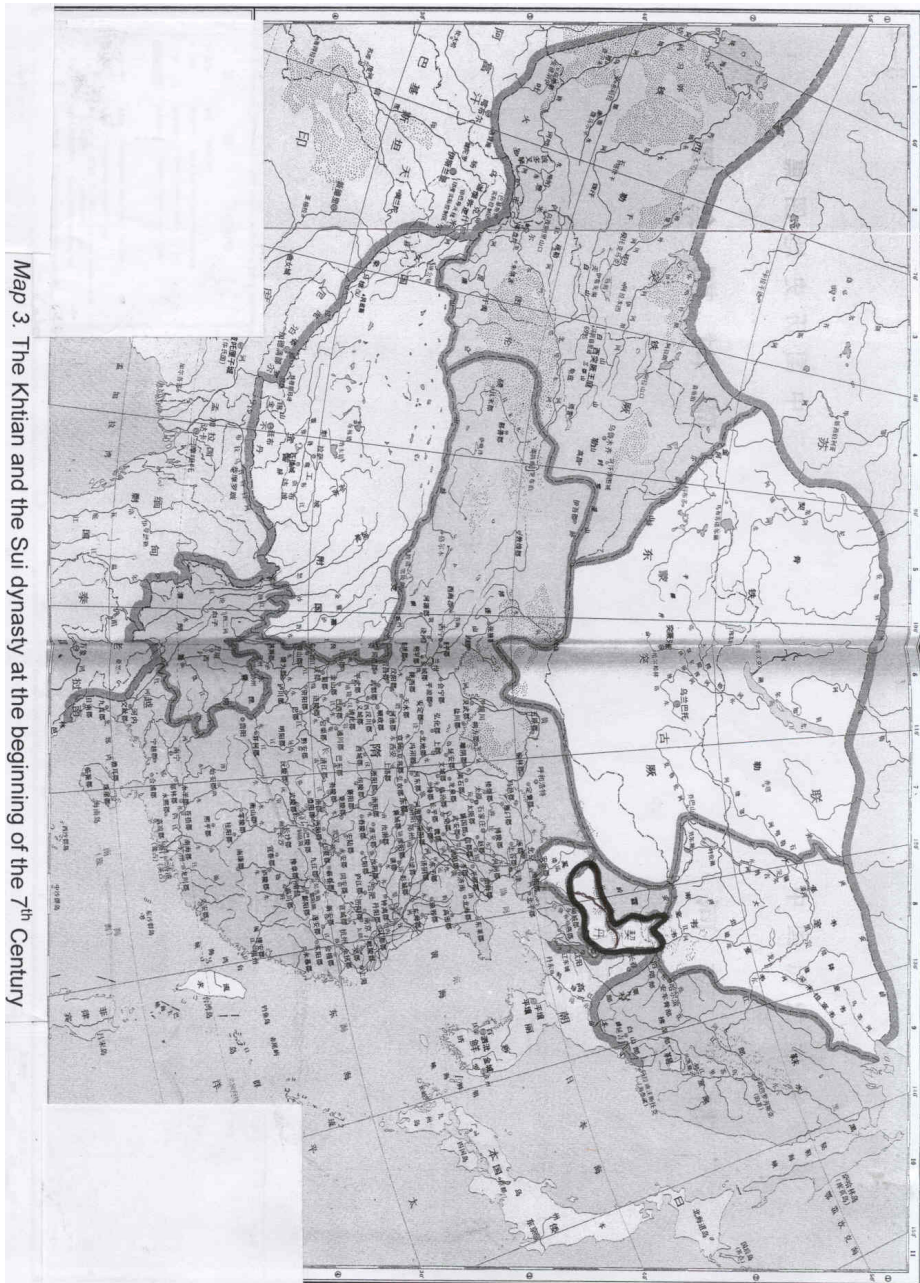
²²⁷ ZZTJ 178. 5543.

²²⁸ See SS 84. 1866-1867.

economical, and cultural relations. Yet the political relations, in general, could be divided into two respects: military conflicts and peaceful relations. The military conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang China will be discussed in Chapter 7. In this chapter, I attempt to draw a general picture of the diplomatic relationship and cultural influence (mainly the Chinese cultural influence on the Khitan) in the Khitan-China relationship during the Tang period.

1. Diplomatic relations between the Khitan *elite* and the Tang court. The content of diplomatic relations or peaceful relations in the Khitan-China relationship included tribute-bestowal relation, granting and receiving officials or noble titles, setting of military and civil prefectures and counties under loose rein, intermarriage links, *etc.* that will be discussed chronologically in the following.

Since the Tang court concentrated on their dynasty building and pacification of China in the beginning years of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), Chinese influence had not yet stretched into Manchuria. In the first decade of the Tang Dynasty most of the Khitan tribes were under control of the eastern Türks who were still strong under the rule of Jieli khaghan. Although some isolated Khitan tribes went sporadically to pay homage or present tributes to the Tang court, most of the others raided the Chinese borders frequently. However, these activities indicates that only some individual Khitan tribes submitted to the Tang, while the majority of the Khitan were still under Turkish control, because the rest of Khitan tribes still occasionally mounted invasive raids on the Chinese borders in the years of submission of the Khitan tribes led by Sun Aocao and Duoluo.



Map 3. The Khitian and the Sui dynasty at the beginning of the 7th Century

In 628, with the decline of the eastern Türks, the Khitan tribal confederation led by Dahe Mohui submitted to the Tang. This was the first time the majority of the Khitan became vassals of the Tang. Next year, Mohui again presented himself at the Tang court. From then, the tributary activities became regular.²²⁹

The triumph in destroying the eastern Türks, and the large-scale military campaigns against the Koryō, made the Tang prestige soar to a considerably high level in the following two decades. Under such conditions, the Khitan tribes were inclined to accept the Chinese suzerainty. In the middle of the 7th Century, a spectacular development was instigated by the Tang to control southern Manchuria. In the fourth month of 648, the Khitan chieftain Quju surrendered his tribe to the Tang. After seven months of the same year Kuge, a leader of the Khitan led all his subordinate tribes to submit to the Tang. Following to the Khitan submission, the Tang court carried out a "loose rein" policy towards the subdued Khitan tribes. The *Xin Tangshu* provides a general expression of "loose rein" policy. It reads:

唐興, 初未暇於四夷, 自太宗平突厥, 西北諸蕃及蠻夷稍稍內屬, 即其部落列置州縣. 其大者為都督府, 以其首領為都督, 刺史, 皆得世襲. 雖貢賦版籍, 多不上戶部. 然聲教所暨, 皆邊州都督, 都護所領, 著於令式.²³⁰

At the beginning the Tang Dynasty, (the Tang) was too busy to attend the four barbarians. Since the pacification of the eastern Türks, the northwestern and southern barbarians had been successively submitted (to the Tang). Thus prefectures and counties were set corresponding to their tribes. The Government-general was set for the biggest tribe. Their native chieftains served as Governor-general and prefects who were permitted to pass their posts on hereditarily. (These prefectures) were allowed not to remit taxes and not to report population to the ministry of finance. Yet these prefectures were supervised by frontier Governor-general or prefect of a protectorate. (The above expression) was integrated into the Tang institutions.

It can be seen that the subdued foreign peoples could possibly enjoy a great degree of autonomy under the "loose rein" policy, but the premise is their acceptance of the status of Tang vassals. The institutions of military and civil prefectures under "loose rein" could be simply regarded as a concretized practice of "yiyi zhi yi (using barbarians to govern barbarians)", an appeasement side of Chinese traditional foreign strategy.

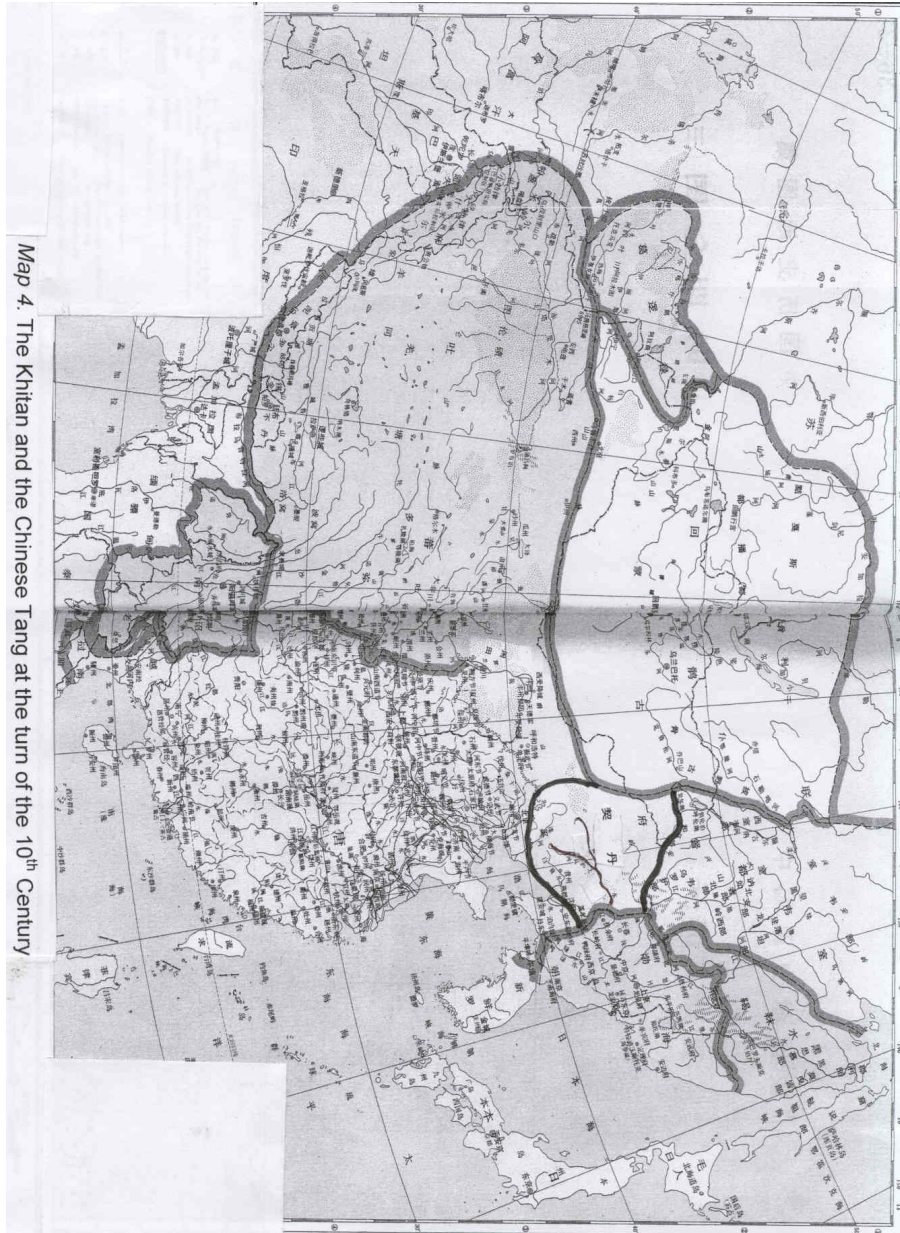
Nevertheless, the peaceful relationship between the Khitan and China remained for only one decade. After the pro-Chinese Khitan leader Kuge died, the Khitan revolted against the Tang in 660. The Khitan situation in the period from 660 to 695 is not clear, for there is no any record about the Khitan in this period found in the available historical sources. After that, the Li-Sun rebellion, which

²²⁹ *Idem.*

²³⁰ *XTS* 43. 1119.

erupted in 696, again made the diplomatic connections between the Khitan and China break off in the next twenty years.

After Turkish Mochuo was killed in the war against the Tiele tribes in 716, the second Turkish Empire began to decline. The Khitan, the former Turkish vassals, broke away from Turkish control and turned to submit to China. The diplomatic relationship between the Khitan and China, which were established in 648, were restored again. In addition, the marriage alliance between the Khitan and the Tang court for the first time established in 716. A Chinese princess, princess of Yongle, was married to the Khitan leader Shihuo. In the following three decades, internal dissension occurred in the Khitan ruling class. The Khitan military chief Ketuyu revolted against the Tang relying on Turkish support, the Khitan-Tang relationship, therefore, was somehow diminished. Nevertheless, the diplomatic relationship between the pro-Chinese Khitan leaders from the Dahe family and the Tang court never stopped until 730. Even during the war between the Khitan and the Tang from 730 to 740, there were still some occasional tribute-bestowal activities between the Khitan and China as recorded in the historical sources.



Map 4. The Khitan and the Chinese Tang at the turn of the 10th Century

In 745 the Türks were destroyed by the Uighurs and the Khitan were then free from Turkish control and became Chinese vassals. However, the Khitan leader Huaixiu was appointed the Governor-general of Songmo, was granted a noble title prince of Chongshun, and married to a Chinese princess, princess of Jingle. But the Khitan killed the Chinese princess and rebelled against the Tang soon after in the same year, because An Lushan, who served as a frontier commander, frequently attacked the Khitan and Xi to gain favor with the Tang court. Because of An Lushan's attacks on the Khitan, the diplomatic relationship between the Khitan and China had been totally damaged for ten years. After the An-Shi rebellion broke out in 755, the power of Chinese central government fell into decline. The Khitan submitted to the Uighurs at the same time. The connection between the Khitan and China, therefore, became much looser than ever before. However, the tribute-bestowal relations between the Khitan and the Tang court still continued. According the *Xin Tangshu*, there were twenty-nine times of tributary activities which were done by the Khitan in eighty-five years from 756 to 841.²³¹ The Khitan envoys could get some bestowals in return as usual, but no official or noble titles were granted to the Khitan leaders, because of their Uighur vassal status, as recorded in the *Xin Tangshu* in {*Materials* 47}.

After the dissolution of the Uighurs in 842, the Khitan again turned to pay their allegiance to the Tang. As a result, the Khitan supreme leader Qushu was granted military titles both as general of Yunhui and general of You Wu Wei as well. A Chinese official seal was given to the Khitan to take the place of the former Uighur seal. In this case, it can be seen that the diplomatic relationship between the Khitan and the Tang was somehow restored. Nevertheless, such a relationship as the same as they shared in the first half of the Tang Dynasty was impossible. Because the power of Chinese central government was on the decline, the Tang court could not control the region of Hebei, still less make an influence on Manchuria. From 842 till the end of the Tang Dynasty in 907, the situation of the Khitan is quite poorly documented in the Chinese historical sources, for "no *Veritable Record* was compiled for the reigns after Wu-tsung" and "most of the additional documentation and the archives for the period during the Huang Chao rebellion and the subsequent fighting, during which Chang'an was virtually destroyed."²³² What we only know is that during the period of Xiantong (860-874), the Khitan king Xi'erzhi sent envoys twice to the Tang court. After that, the Khitan started the process of foreign expansion in preparation for building up an empire.

²³¹ *Idem* 219. 6172.

²³² Twitchett. In Twitchett ed., 1979, p. 44.

The diplomatic relationship between the Khitan *elite* and the Tang court exerted great influence upon the development of the Khitan both politically and economically. Firstly, the "loose rein" policy of the Tang Dynasty provided political protection for the Khitan to resist foreign invasions. Those military and civil prefectures of the Khitan under "loose rein" were politically Chinese administrative divisions in name, so that the Chinese central government was responsible for their security. When other political forces had the intention of attacking the Khitan, they had to take the possible consequences into account, because of Chinese vassal status of the Khitan. This somewhat reduced the possibility of foreign invasions against the Khitan. Moreover, in the early period of the Tang Dynasty, the Tang court made every effort to win the Khitan's support in order to counter their stronger enemies, such as the Türks and Koryŏ. Such a political fosterage created some favorable conditions for the development of the Khitan. Secondly, the subsidies, bestowals, and even dowries, the Khitan received from the Tang court through tribute-bestowal and inter-marriage relations, became an important part of the economic basis of the Khitan. It was also a shortcut for the Khitan tribes to get rich. In the traditional tribute-bestowal system, the bestowals from the Chinese courts given to the barbarians were usually much more than the tributes the barbarians presented to the Chinese courts. The bestowals usually included silk, silver wares, *etc.* Silk was the most important Chinese product among the bestowals. For example, in 724 the Tang court bestowed 50,000 rolls of silk once to the Khitan.²³³ Except for those consumed by the Khitan *elite*, most of the silk was put into international trade, from which the Khitan gained considerable amount of profits. In addition to political benefits, as Chinese vassals, the Khitan could get more economic benefits, compared to the vassals of any of the other stronger political forces on the steppe, such as the Türks and Uighurs.

2. Chinese cultural influence on the Khitan. 2a. The Xianbei tradition. At the turn of the 3rd Century, both the Xiongnu Empire on the steppe and the centralized state power in China Proper declined. With the collapse of central order both in China and on the steppe, the Xianbei, from whom the Khitan were derived, took advantage of this to rise to power. They gradually migrated southward and westward, and finally occupied the Mongolian steppe and Manchuria, neighboring China Proper. In later centuries, many of the Xianbei and other non-Chinese lived along the Chinese borderland and mixed with the frontier Chinese people. This made it possible for the Xianbei to be in contact with Chinese culture. The Xianbei had been influenced by Chinese culture and way of life and even had been partly sinified since the beginning of the 4th Century when the Murong

²³³ *CFYG* 975. 11449.

Xianbei, who belonged to the east section of the Xianbei the same as the Khitan did, migrated southeastward to southern Manchuria. Inhabiting the Manchurian border land, these Xianbei tribes had experiences contact with the Chinese border officials, living together with the frontier Chinese people, frontier trade with Chinese merchants or small retailers, *etc.*, in addition to the political contact with the Chinese courts. Throughout these experiences, the chieftains and tribesmen of the Xianbei tribes had opportunities to be in contact with and familiar with Chinese way of life. After further understanding of the advance of Chinese culture, they attempted to learn and adopt it.

At the end of the 3rd Century, the Xianbei tribes led by Murong Gui began to inhabit Bocheng (northwest of modern Jin County of Liaoning Province) quite close to the Chinese border area. After establishing a regime at the beginning of the 4th Century, the Murong Xianbei started the process of learning and adopting Chinese culture, including building up walled cities; encouraging agriculture; adopting settled life as farmers; employing Chinese administrators to run the new part of the economy (agriculture and craft production) and using Chinese advisors to reorganize their army.²³⁴ At the same time during the reign period of Murong Gui, the politics in China Proper became corrupted, gradually lost control of north China, and large part of Chinese residents, who previously inhabited north China, fled to the Murong regime for protection. The Murong policy towards these refugees was to welcome them by setting prefectures and counties as Chinese administration to control them. These Chinese refugees including bureaucrats, intellectuals, despotic gentry, farmers, handicraftsmen, *etc.* helped to deepen the Chinese influence on the Xianbei regimes in various aspects, and sped up the process of the sinification of the Murong Xianbei. In 337, Murong Huang established the Qian Yan in north China. In order to control both the Xianbei and other nomadic tribes and the Chinese subjects, the dual-organization that was to control different peoples by different ways was initiated. Under such conditions, the Xianbei regime had to adopt Chinese ways to control their Chinese subjects. This could be regarded as a necessity for the sinification of the Murong Xianbei.

The other example is the Tuoba Xianbei and their established Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534). The Tuoba Xianbei's being in contact with Chinese culture started as early as the 260s, when Liwei, one of the Tuoba leaders, began to build up a tribute-bestowal relationship with the Cao Wei (220-265) and the Western Jin (265-316) in China Proper. In 261, Liwei even left his son, Shamohan, as a hostage prince in the Cao Wei capital, Luoyang, to learn Chinese culture. The sinification of the Tuoba Xianbei started in the reign period of Shiyijian. Shiyijian, who had been a hostage prince in the later Zhao (a sinified regime

²³⁴ Barfield 1989, p. 107.

founded by the Jie people in north China in the 4th Century) for ten years, was sinified to a great extent and learned of many Chinese institutions and regulations. In 338, one year after Shiyijian enthroned himself to be the king of the Dai, he established a Chinese style court following the Jin institutions. He employed some Han Chinese as high-ranking officials in the court, applied Chinese institutions and law in running his state, built a walled city, and also encouraged agriculture in the area where the Chinese farmers lived. In 386, the Tuoba re-rose and their leader Tuoba Kui enthroned himself to be the king of the Dai and changed their state name from the Dai to the Wei. After the Northern Wei united north China in 442, the Tuoba started a process of further sinification. The Northern Wei not only inherited the dual-organization initiated by the Murong Xianbei for the separate control of tribesmen and the Chinese, but also made the Xianbei and other tribesmen sinified. Their state structure was founded according to Chinese institutions, which was applied by the Chinese courts from the Qin Dynasty to the Jin Dynasty. In addition, the reforms carried out by emperor Daowu and emperor Xiaowen gradually produced profound changes in many different sides of the Xianbei society in the almost one hundred years from 398 to 495. As consequences to this, the nomadic tribesmen gradually became settled farmers and registered subjects of the state the same as the Chinese farmers were; the Xianbei tribal people gradually adopted the Chinese family names, the Chinese language and even the Chinese style of dressing instead of their own; and the Xianbei people gradually assimilated with the Han Chinese by a policy, which encouraged intermarriage between the Xianbei people and the Han Chinese. The Northern Wei became a typical Chinese dynasty and was included into the legitimate Chinese dynasties by the traditional Chinese historians. The reasons for the deep sinification of the Tuoba Xianbei could be concluded in the following: First of all, the sinification of the Murong Xianbei had set a model for the Tuoba in controlling both the tribesmen and the Chinese; secondly, the Xianbei's admiration for advanced Chinese civilization was their initial motivation to accept Chinese culture; thirdly, in order to stabilize their control over the area where the Chinese people lived, the Xianbei rulers had to make use of Chinese bureaucrats and intellectuals to run the Chinese institutions; and finally, in order to win the legitimate status of a Chinese dynasty, which could possibly attract more Chinese officials to serve in their court, the Xianbei rulers had to adopt Chinese-style bureaucracy and administration to make their state as much as possible look like a Chinese one.

As a branch of the Xianbei, the Khitan had a similar cultural background, similar internal structure, similar experience in communicating with China, and a similar external environment with the Murong and Tuoba. Therefore, though they differed widely from the steppe nomads such as the Xiongnu, Türks and Uighur,

the Khitan appeared similar to the Murong and Tuoba who proved easier to be influenced by Chinese culture and way of life.

2b. Tracing back to the early history of the Khitan. Chinese cultural influence on the Khitan had undergone a hundreds of years course of history. However, at the latest, their acceptance and adoption of Chinese culture started around Abaoji's founding of an imperial state.

As early as the second half of the 5th Century or even earlier, the Khitan had experienced to live together with the frontier Chinese. In the *Description of the Kumo Xi* of the *Wei Shu*, an imperial edict issued by emperor Shizong of the Northern Wei is recorded:

庫莫奚去太和二十一年以前, 與安營二州邊民參居, 交易往來, 并無疑貳. 至二十二年叛逆以來, 遂爾遠竄. 今雖款附, 猶在塞表, 每請入塞與民交易 ...²³⁵

Before the twenty-first year of Taihe (497), the Kumo Xi had lived together with the frontier people in Anzhou and Yingzhou, and had traded with them without suspicions. After their revolt in the twenty-second year of Taihe, (the Kumo Xi) went far away. Although they submitted (to us) now, they still lived beyond the northern border of China Proper. They frequently asked to come inside of China Proper to trade with our frontier people ...

The above record describes the situation of the Kumo Xi at the end of the 5th Century. However, it is more likely that the Khitan, who had been in the same tribal community with the Kumo Xi and closely related with the Kumo Xi in their pre-dynastic period, might have been in the similar situation to the Kumo Xi. A piece of evidence, which recorded in the *Description of the Khitan* also in the *Wei Shu*, can possibly prove this speculation, see *Materials* {11, 12}.

In the third year of Taihe (479), one of the Khitan tribes led by Wuyu asked to move inside the border to submit to the Northern Wei with 3,000 carts and over 10,000 tribesmen, for fear of the Koguryō (Gaogouli)'s invasion. They finally reached the eastern bank of the Bailang River. From then, the Khitan maintained a peaceful relationship with the Northern Wei until the end of the Northern Wei Dynasty in 534. The Bailang River is identical to the modern Daling River that is located about 100 kilometers southeast of Chaoyang city where the Government-general of Yingzhou was located in the Northern Wei Dynasty. The area east of the Bailang River was under the jurisdiction of Yingzhou in the period of the Northern Wei. It meant that the Khitan had been within the border of China for decades, living together with the frontier Chinese people. Furthermore, the frontier trade between the Khitan and the frontier Chinese was quite prosperous in the period of the Northern Wei. The frontier market was located in the area between Helong (modern Chaoyang City of Liaoning Province) and Miyun

²³⁵ *WS* 100. 2223.

(modern Miyun County of Beijing). Later, in the period of the Sui Dynasty (581-618), a Khitan tribe, which had deserted the Türks and gone to submit to the Sui with more than 4,000 households, also had lived within the territory of China for some years. See *Materials* {21} for detail. Such experiences of living together with the frontier Chinese provided opportunities for some ordinary Khitan tribesmen to be in contact with the Chinese way of life. Chinese culture then inevitably permeated through the Khitan society.

2c. Cultural contacts in the Tang period. In the period of the Tang, Chinese culture produced further influence on different respects of the Khitan society throughout various means. Firstly, the Khitan missions frequently presented at the Tang court. Such missions sometimes were quite large, containing members from one to several hundred. For instances, according to the *Cefu Yuangui*, in 720, the Khitan ruler sent three hundred and fifty-four embassies led by Zhang Shaomianju to pay homage to the Tang court;²³⁶ in 726, a Khitan mission containing more than one hundred members visited the Tang capital;²³⁷ in 743, a Khitan mission that contained one hundred and twenty members led by Fucongzhi attended the court;²³⁸ and according to the *Xin Tangshu*, in the period of Zhide (756-758), the Khitan annually sent several dozens of chieftains and despotic gentries to enter Chang'an, the capital of the Tang. There were several hundreds of subjects under those chieftains and despotic gentries who temporarily stayed in guesthouses in Youzhou, one of the northeastern frontier prefectures of the Tang. Refer to *Materials* {47} for detail. The members of these missions often included large numbers of Khitan *elite*, chieftains and despotic gentries. Being on diplomatic missions to China made the Khitan *elite* have chances to gain knowledge of the capital and court of the Tang, to be familiar with the Chinese way of life, laying a foundation for the Khitan to accept and adopt Chinese institutions in order to establish an imperial dynasty at the beginning of the 10th Century. Secondly, the "hostage princes" received the Chinese education and experienced Chinese way of life in the capital of the Tang. In the Tang Dynasty, as a part of appeasement foreign policy, a policy of keeping "hostage princes" as hostages in the capital was often carried out. The so-called "hostage princes" usually were sons or nephews of the rulers of the non-Chinese peoples. They were allowed to enter the Guozhi Jian (imperial University) to learn Chinese language, ideology, history, law, institutions and even geography as well. They also served as officers in the imperial guards at the same time, for they usually had advantage in military skills. The Khitan had a considerable number of "hostage princes" left in the Tang

²³⁶ *CFYG* 974. 11416.

²³⁷ *Idem* 975. 11450.

²³⁸ *Idem*. 11457.

capital, according to the historical sources. Sun Wanrong, one of the leaders of the famous Khitan rebellion at the end of the 7th Century, had been a "hostage prince" himself. The *Xin Tangshu* claims, it was because Sun Wanrong knew well the advantages and disadvantages of China, he revolted against China without hesitation.²³⁹ It can be seen that the eruption of this Khitan rebellion had something to do with Sun Wangrong's experience of being a "hostage prince", in addition to the other reasons that caused this rebellion. Sun Wanrong's knowledge of the autocratic monarchy system based on Chinese tradition gave him the ambition to break away from the Tang control and attempt to create an autonomous regime. For the Tang authority, this policy indeed had some disadvantages. As stated in the *Xin Tangshu*, "At that time, there were many "hostage princes" of the four barbarians in the capital (of the Tang), such as Lun Qinling, Ashina Yuanzhe, and Sun Wanrong. Since they had been 'hostage princes' and knew Chinese law and institutions well, all of them made border troubles after they came back."²⁴⁰ Xue Deng, a high ranking official in the empress Wu's court, already realized these disadvantages and suggested that this policy be abolished. But his suggestion was rejected by empress Wu and the "hostage prince policy" continued to be practiced for in rest of the years of the Tang. For the Khitan, however, this policy probably exerted a profound impact on their historical development in the future. These Khitan "hostage princes" usually would be the next generation of Khitan rulers. The Chinese education they received could inevitably produce a great influence on the next generation of the Khitan in various respects in the whole society. Thirdly, there were some non-governmental contacts between ordinary peoples of the Khitan and the frontier Chinese. The frontier trade produced a good opportunity for the Khitan ordinary tribesmen to be in contact with Chinese people and Chinese products. The frontier trade had been a peaceful means for the barbarians to obtain Chinese goods for centuries, including official trade control by government and non-governmental trade. Here the non-governmental trade will be discussed only. Since traditional Confucian historians very much despise merchants and commercial activities, there is quite little information about trade activities in the Chinese historical sources, and the records concerning the frontier trade with the barbarians are even fewer. What we know is that the Khitan began to trade with China in the Chinese borders as early as the period of the Northern Wei, see *Materials* {11} for detail. In the period of Tang Dynasty, it can be inferred that the frontier trade activities carried out by the Khitan people were more prosperous than before. According to the *Biography of Song Qingli* of the *Xin Tangshu*, after the Khitan and Xi re-

²³⁹ *XTS* 219. 6168.

²⁴⁰ *Idem* 112. 4170.

submitted to China in the period of emperor Xuanzong, as the Governor-general of Yingzhou, Song Qingli engaged in economic development of Yingzhou, a frontier prefecture of China. It is recorded:

開屯田八十餘所 ... 又集胡商立邸肆. 不數年, 倉廩充, 居人蕃輯.²⁴¹

(Song Qingli) had garrison troops open up wasteland and grow food grain in more than eighty places ... (He) also collected barbarian merchants and built up residential districts and shops. In a few years, the granaries were full, and the residents multiplied.

From the above record, it can be seen that there were considerable numbers of barbarian merchants in the area of Yingzhou in the period of emperor Xuanzong. Since Yingzhou was quite close to the territory of the Khitan and it is stated in the *Jiu Tangshu* and *Xin Tangshu* that Yingzhou was set for repression of the Khitan and Xi, it is likely that there were a certain number of Khitan traders among those barbarian merchants. Moreover, the trade activities, that were originally quite prosperous, were encouraged by the local government of the Tang frontier prefecture. In addition to the frontier trade, there were large group of the Khitan and other northeastern barbarians who lived in the borderland together with the frontier Chinese. The Japanese specialist Matsui claims in his work *History of the Rise of the Khitan* that the Government-general of Songmo, which was set for settling the subdued Khitan tribes in 648, was located near Yingzhou. This means that the main camp, where the supreme chieftains of the Khitan, lived in, was close to Yingzhou. He further states that another Khitan leader Sun Aocao who submitted to China at the beginning of the Tang, his sons and his grandsons also lived near Yingzhou.²⁴² A piece of historical evidence in *Materials* {34} verified Mastui's statement. It records that on the way of a punitive expedition against the Koryō (Gaoli), emperor Taizong passed by Yingzhou and met the supreme leader and seniors of the Khitan. This record states clearly that the Khitan supreme leader and seniors lived in Yingzhou, or were close to Yingzhou. In *Materials* {40(1)}, the *Zizhi Tongjian* also mentioned that both Li Jinzhong and Sun Wanrong, the leaders of the formidable Khitan rebellion in the times of empress Wu, lived beside Yingzhou City. It is clear that at least in the period from the beginning of the Tang till the times of empress Wu, the Khitan supreme leaders lived in, or were close to Yingzhou. It can also be inferred that the tribesmen under these leaders probably lived in or near Yingzhou together with the Chinese frontier residents. Added weight is given by Franke & Twitchett in "Introduction" of *The Cambridge History of China* vol. 6. They maintain that "the early Tang government settled further some large group of non-Han people Chiang, Tangut, Tu-yu-hun, Tibetans, Türks, Uighurs, Khitan, and even Sogdians from Central

²⁴¹ *Idem* 130. 4493-4494.

²⁴² Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 99.

Asia – in their northern frontier prefectures".²⁴³ It is more likely that such a situation did not change much until the end of the Tang Dynasty.

Even though the Khitan was in contact with Chinese culture in various respects in both governmental and non-governmental contacts from the period of the Northern Wei until the end of the Tang, Chinese cultural influence on the Khitan was only limited in a "contact" and a superficial recognition. For most of the period of the pre-dynastic times of the Khitan, Chinese culture was not accepted by the Khitan at all, because of the sharp distinction between the steppe culture and agrarian civilization. The pioneer who started to accept Chinese culture was Abaoji, the founder of the Khitan Empire.

Chinese cultural influence and the founding of the Khitan Empire. In discussing the basis of Abaoji's founding of an imperial state, Chinese specialist Chen Shu advances a brilliant theory. He claims that there were two peculiar regions which existed at the end of the Tang Dynasty, one was the sinified Khitan Yila tribe that was completely different from the Khitan steppe, and the other was the barbarized Chinese northeastern frontier, which was sharply distinct from China Proper. The distinctions manifested obviously in culture and politics. These two particular regions, however, closely related with each other culturally and ethnologically. It was the existence of these two peculiar regions that laid a foundation for the Khitan Empire.²⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the Yila tribe could not be suddenly sinified at the end of the Tang Dynasty. In my opinion, it might have undergone a gradual process of historical development. To reveal this process more clearly, the history of the Yila tribe, therefore, needs to be retraced.

According to the Chinese scholars Shu Fen and Cai Meibiao' studies, the predecessor of the Yila tribe was the Yishihuo tribe, which existed outside of the Dahe confederation.²⁴⁵ This deduction that bases on the historical sources is quite reasonable. According to *Materials* {28(7)}, Xinzhou was set for settling the Yishiluo tribe in 696, the same year when the Li-Sun rebellion broke out in the Chinese frontier area from Yingzhou throughout Youzhou. The seat of administration was located in Fanyang (modern Ji County of Tianjin city), according to the record in the *Xin Tangshu*. However, in the *Jiu Tangshu*, it is recorded that Xinzhou had been moved to Qingzhou (modern Qingzhou city of Shandong province) for eight years from 697 to 705. It can be seen that this Khitan tribe was not involved in the Li-Sun rebellion, but migrated southward and submitted to the Tang, becoming a pro-Chinese tribe for a certain period. It is

²⁴³ Franke & Twitchett. In Franke & Twitchett, eds., 1994, p. 9.

²⁴⁴ Chen, Shu 1948, pp. 97-107.

²⁴⁵ Cai, Meibiao 1964. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 973, 975-976; Shu, Fen 1984, pp. 66-67.

more likely the Yishihuo tribe had experienced to live together with the frontier Han Chinese inside the Chinese frontier for many years. Such an experience made the chieftain and tribesmen of the Yishihuo tribe have opportunities for contact with Chinese culture, and to be familiar with the Chinese way of life. Since it was excused from the tragic lot of being destroyed in the disaster caused by the Li-Sun rebellion, this tribe grew steadily in later years. In the 730s, the tribe named Yila, which was believed to be derived from the Yishihuo, had already become a powerful tribe independent of and even over the eight tribes of the Yaonian. In *Materials* {48}, there are the following descriptions: Yundeshi, Abaoji's grandfather, "was the first to teach people to sow and reap"; and Shulan, Abaoji's uncle, "was the first to practice masonry and to establish walled cities". From the above records, Chen Shu makes his statement that although those sowing, reaping, masonry and walled city-building were not necessarily done by the Khitan people, there had been some Han Chinese civilization in the Khitan territory or at least in the area under the Yila's jurisdiction, since the time of Yundeshi (820s-860s?).²⁴⁶ Until the time of Abaoji, the particular historical background of north China at the end of the Tang Dynasty made the sinification of the Yila tribe get further intensified, becoming a peculiar region on the outer fringe of the Khitan society. It was based upon the economic strength of this peculiar region and by his tribal military power, that Abaoji united the Khitan tribes and established the Khitan state.

After the disasters of An Lushan's rebellion in the middle of the 8th Century, the central authority of the Tang Dynasty was on the decline. The territory of China Proper was gradually carved up by separatist warlords into numerous regional regimes, "competing for hegemony and constantly at war with one another".²⁴⁷ Among these regimes, Lulong was located in northern Hebei (the area north of the Yellow River, from present Henan and Shandong up to the northern border of China Proper.²⁴⁸), neighboring the Khitan. Since the rulers of Lulong concentrated on fighting with other regional regimes and preserving their own strength, they had kept peace with the Khitan for almost half a century. Under such a peaceful circumstance, the cultural contacts and economic relations between the Khitan and China, through frontier trade and other means, intensified. Particularly, the Yila tribe that was supposed to be closer to the Chinese frontier was influenced by Chinese culture more profoundly than any other Khitan tribes.

At the turn of the 10th Century, Lulong was under the control of the warlords Liu Rengong and his son Liu Shouguang. According to record in *Materials*

²⁴⁶ Chen, Shu 1948, pp. 106-107.

²⁴⁷ Franke & Twitchett. In Franke & Twitchett, eds., 1994, p. 5.

²⁴⁸ Wittfogel & Feng 1949, p. 472, note. 40.

{50(2)}, because of their despotic internal policies, the people of Youzhou and Zhuozhou fled to the Khitan. In the *Qidan Guozhi*, there are more:

初, 唐末藩鎮驕橫, 互相并吞鄰藩, 燕人軍士多亡歸契丹, 契丹日益強大。²⁴⁹

At the end of the Tang Dynasty, regional military governors were arrogant and invaded each other quite frequently, so that the civilians, military officer and soldiers of the Yan fled to the Khitan. The Khitan, therefore, were getting powerful.

In addition to those refugees, there were considerable numbers of Han Chinese captives who had been captured to the Khitan territory during the Khitan's constant southward expansion, since the 880s. Since the Yila was the most nearest Khitan tribe to the Chinese frontier, most of the refugees and captives actually arrived at the Yila tribe. These refugees and captives included people of many types. The *Hu Qiao Xian Lu ji* describes in detail a variety of the Han Chinese whom Hu Qiao saw in the Khitan territory:

有綾, 錦諸工作, 宦者, 翰林, 伎術, 角抵, 秀才, 僧尼, 道士等, 皆中國人, 而并, 汾, 幽, 薊之人尤多。²⁵⁰

There were silk-weavers, officials, members of the Imperial Academy, acrobats, wrestlers, scholars, Buddhist monks and nuns, and Taoist priests. All of them were Chinese, and most of them came from Bing, Fen, You, and Ji prefectures.

It was because Abaoji and his Yila tribe had been gradually influenced by Chinese culture for almost a century that they were familiar with things Chinese, and recognized some of which could be made use of to develop their own strength. Both the *Jiu Wudai Shi* and *Xin Wudai Shi* record that Abaoji himself was good at Chinese language.²⁵¹ This was definitely a consequence of being influenced by the Han Chinese and Chinese culture that had flowed over into the Khitan territory. As well, Abaoji's policy towards the Chinese refugees and captives, therefore, was positive. Firstly, Abaoji built some Han cities, which followed Chinese institutions, to settle the Han Chinese. The *Materials* {50(2)} has details in recording the process of building the Han cities. According to Yao Congwu's study, in addition, the Han city was located southeast of the Tan Mountain on the upper reaches of the Luan River. There were many other Han cities, which were distributed to the southern parts of the capital cities of the Khitan at the beginning of the Liao Dynasty.²⁵² In my contention, the peculiarity of the Han city that was located southeast of the Tan Mountain compared to others is that it was the first Han city that could probably be regarded as an economic base, on which Abaoji

²⁴⁹ *QDGZ* 1. 2.

²⁵⁰ *Idem* 25. 238.

²⁵¹ *JTS* 137. 1831; *XWDS* 72. 890.

²⁵² Yao, Congwu 1935. Repr. in: Yang, Jialuo 1973, pp. 122-127.

mainly relied to unite the other Khitan tribes to found his own state, and it was likely to be in the territory of the Yila tribe. Furthermore, most of the other Han cities were built in succession later after the founding of the Khitan state in 907 for settling the Han Chinese, most of whom were captured by the Khitan in further expansionist campaigns, according to the *Liao Shi*.²⁵³ Secondly, Abaoji placed some Chinese intellectuals in important positions as advisers to assist him to found a Chinese style empire. Among them, Kang Moji, Han Yanhui, and Han Zhigu had official positions in the Khitan administration were as high as prime ministers. All of them made great contributions for the founding of the Khitan state. They are called by the *Liao Shi* the meritorious officials who assisted Abaoji to found the Khitan state.²⁵⁴

These Han Chinese, and the Chinese culture, ideology, advanced productive skills and labor forces they brought to the Khitan, had produced great effect on the founding of the Khitan state. This effect can be summarized into following respects:

First of all, acceptance of Chinese agrarian culture and way of life made the Yila tribe much richer and more powerful than the other Khitan tribes. Most of Chinese refugees and captives were farmers. According to *Materials* {50(2)}, Abaoji led them to cultivate in the Han city southeast of the Tan Mountain, because the land was suitable to grow five grains. These Chinese farmers not only were used as manpower to produce agricultural products for the Yila tribe, they but also brought agricultural skills and farm tools to the Khitan. A pacification policy towards these Chinese farmers was carried out by Abaoji and his Chinese advisers. As recorded in *Materials* {50(2)}, "He (Abaoji) also constructed a city, houses and markets for them (the Han Chinese) following the system of Youzhou. The Han Chinese were satisfied with these and had no thought of returning." Such a policy, actually, was suggested by a Chinese adviser, Han Yanhui. In the *Biography of Han Yanhui* of the *Liao Shi*, it is recorded:

(韓延徽)乃請樹城郭,分市里,以居漢人之降者.又為定配偶,教墾藝,以生養之.以故逃亡者少.²⁵⁵

(Han Yanhui) asked for building walled cities, and dividing markets and alleys, for settling the subdued Han Chinese. As well, (he) also selected spouses for them, and taught them cultivation skills, for breeding them up. Therefore, fleers became fewer.

Under such a policy, agriculture gradually was incorporated into the economic basis of the Khitan, or at least of the Yila tribe, and was getting more and more important in the Khitan economic life, essentially becoming a foundation for the

²⁵³ *LS* 37-41. 437-516.

²⁵⁴ *Idem* 74. 1230-1233.

²⁵⁵ *Idem*. 1231.

Yila tribe to become rich, for the Chinese farmers who practiced agriculture had already become part of the political Khitan since they arrived in the Khitan territory. In addition to agriculture, agriculture-related handicraft industries, commerce, *etc.* also spread to the Khitan along with the Chinese craftsmen and merchants who were included in the refugees and captives, around Abaoji's founding of the Khitan state. Some of the handicraft industries for example, the spinning and weaving, were not only practiced by Chinese the weavers but also were passed on to the Khitan people. As recorded in the *Qidan Guozh*:

(盧文進)又教契丹以中國織紵工作無不備,契丹由此益強.²⁵⁶

(Lu Wenjin) also taught all kinds of Chinese spinning and weaving to the Khitan. The Khitan, therefore, were becoming more powerful.

As for commerce, according to *Materials* {50(2)}, there were markets and stores in the Han city, which was located southeast of the Tan Mountain, at the end of Khitan's pre-dynastic period. Moreover, at the beginning of the Khitan state, emperor Taizu (Abaoji) again built Yangcheng north of the Tan Mountain for trade with China Proper.²⁵⁷ The positions of both this Han city and Yangcheng were approximately on a vital communication line from the Yila tribe to the northern part of the modern Shanxi province of China. It can be imagined that the commercial activities between the Khitan and China Proper would be quite prosperous at that time. Besides, the walled city, the typical symbol of Chinese way of life, also emerged in the Khitan territory. Masonry and walled-city building were practiced in the Khitan as early as Shulan's time, whatever the builders were the Han Chinese or the Khitan. Around Abaoji's founding of the Khitan state, some Chinese advisers suggested Abaoji to build walled cities for settling the Chinese refugees and captives. Although the Chinese way of life was not adopted by the Khitan tribesmen at this stage, it was leniently allowed and encouraged to develop in the Khitan territory, at least in the area under the Yila tribe's jurisdiction. This inevitably exerted an imperceptible influence on those native Khitan people for their gradual sinification in later couple of centuries.

Secondly, Chinese ideology made Abaoji break free from the egalitarian Khitan tradition of leadership succession and political order, and progressively adopt the Chinese style of a centralized political system. According to the Chinese historical sources, it is the Chinese who imbued Abaoji with these Chinese ways of thinking. In the annotations of the *Zizhi Tongjian*, there are two pieces of record concerning this issue. One is quoted from Jia Wei's *Bei Shi*, it reads:

²⁵⁶ *QDGZ* 18. 174.

²⁵⁷ *LS* 1. 4 & 60. 929.

武皇會保機故雲州城，結以為兄弟之好。時列兵相去五里，使人馬上持盃往來，以展酬酢之禮。保機喜，謂武皇曰：“我蕃中酋長，舊法三年則罷，若他日見公，復相禮否？”武皇曰：“我受朝命鎮太原，亦有遷移之制，但不受代則可，何憂罷乎！”保機由此用其教，不受諸族之代。²⁵⁸

Wuhuang (Li Keyong) met (A)baoji in the old Yunzhou city, and made brotherhood with him. At that time, soldiers lined up for five *li* (2.5 km) long. Some people, who were on horses, came and went with holding cups of wine, for performing etiquette of exchange of toasts. (A)baoji was happy, and said to Wuhuang (Li Keyong), "I am a barbarian chieftain. According to the old law, I will be replaced in three years. If I will meet you on that day (after I am replaced), will you treat me with such an etiquette?" Wuhuang (Li Keyong) answered, "I am ordered to guard Taiyuan. There is also a rule of replacement. It will be Ok, if you refuse to be replaced. Do not worry about being dismissed from office!" (A)baoji, therefore, adopted this advice and refused to be replaced by other (Khitan) lineages.

According to *Zhuangzong Liezhuan* quoted in the *Zizhi Tongjian*, this event happened in the second year of Tianyou (905)²⁵⁹, after Abaoji was appointed Yilijin in 901, and before he became a khaghan of the Khitan in 907. At that time, Abaoji was still a Yilijin, the chieftain of the Yila tribe and military chief of the Khitan confederation. Two years after Abaoji's making brotherhood with Li Keyong, the leader of separatist regime in Hedong (modern Shanxi Province), he not only rejected being replaced at his post of Yilijin, but also took the place of the Yaonian lineage to become the khaghan of the Khitan confederation. It needs to be illustrated is that, although the *Liao Shi* claims that Abaoji ascended the throne of emperor, the throne he ascended actually was merely the khaghan of the Khitan tribes, for the Khitan tribes had not been united and the imperial state had not established yet. In addition to some other reasons, Li Keyong's advise in 905 can be undoubtedly regarded as the catalytic agent that promoted this revolutionary change. The other is quoted from Zhao Zhizhong's *Luting Zaji*:

有韓知古，韓穎，康枚，王奏事，王郁，皆中國人，共勸太祖不受代。²⁶⁰

There were Han Zhigu, Han Ying, Wang Zoushi and Wang Yu, who were all Chinese. They persuaded emperor Taizu not to be replaced.

This event might have happened after Abaoji became the Khitan khaghan in 907, and before he made himself the emperor of the Khitan in 916. In *Materials {50(2)}*, there is also a piece of record quoted from the *Xin Wudai Shi*, describing Abaoji's refusal to be replaced, under the exhortations made by the Han Chinese, after having been the Khitan khaghan for nine years. Unfortunately it is not

²⁵⁸ ZZTJ 266. 8677.

²⁵⁹ *Idem*.

²⁶⁰ *Idem*. 8678.

concretely dated. With the help of the *Liao Shi*, it could be known that this event happened in 916, exactly nine years after Abaoji became the Khitan khaghan.²⁶¹ It indicates that Abaoji once again refused to be replaced. This time he not only rejected to be replaced with his position of the Khitan khaghan, but also really made himself the emperor of the Khitan state. As a result, the centralized imperial authority was finally established by following the system of Chinese dynasties.

The so-called Abaoji's refusal "to be replaced" in the above two cited records was suspected by some Chinese specialists, since they do not believe that the leadership of the supreme office was rotated between different families and the replacement of the leadership had a three-year limitation as well in the pre-dynastic period of the Khitan. They speculate that these records were probably from some hearsays or the imagination of Chinese on the Khitan, because the records are about the Khitan, but written by the Chinese historians. Therefore, they claim that such records are not completely reliable sources of information.²⁶² However, it is undoubted that Abaoji's establishment of the Khitan state was influenced by the Chinese ideology.

It can be seen that the old Khitan tradition of leadership succession and political order was totally destroyed. After twice of "refusing to be replaced", Abaoji became an emperor from a tribal leader, and the Khitan transferred from a tribal confederation into an imperial state step by step in only fifteen years. In addition, Abaoji also had an ambition to change the system of succession to leadership from "hereditary election" to "hereditary succession". In 916, Abaoji designated his eldest son as heir. But hereditary succession was not finally realized at the end of his reign, because it was obstructed by the traditional forces in the Khitan tribes. His ambition finally was achieved after more than half a century when emperor Shengzong was enthroned in 982. It is more likely that Abaoji knew some thing about the system of centralized imperial authority from the Han Chinese and had ambition to become the Khitan emperor long ago. However, the exhortations, made by the sinified Shatuo noble, Li Keyong, and Chinese advisers, helped to bring about the achievement of his ambition. Such a transformation could be undoubtedly regarded as a revolutionary one, in which Chinese tradition and political institutions that the Han Chinese gradually instilled into Abaoji played an inestimable role. Without the influence of Chinese culture and ideology, it was impossible that Abaoji could have ambitions to become an emperor and to found an imperial state, even though he would be a Khitan khaghan without doubt, due to the illustrious and powerful family background he originated from, together with his own courage and intelligence.

²⁶¹ *LS* 1. 2-3 & 10-11.

²⁶² Yang, Zhijiu 1948. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp. 217-229.

Thirdly, some Chinese intellectuals were put in important positions in the Khitan administration. Soon before the founding of the Khitan state, in order to establish a new political organization that was sharply contrary to the traditional tribal structure, Abaoji needed help from the Chinese intellectuals. Among the Chinese intellectuals, Kang Moji, Han Yanhui and Han Zhigu were the most outstanding people in assisting Abaoji to found the Khitan state. All of their official posts had been up to as high as the prime minister in Abaoji's reign. The *Liao Shi* has biographies for these three Chinese officials. They were called "the meritorious officials who assisted Abaoji to found the state" with other Khitan officials by the *Liao Shi*. In the *Biography of Kang Moji*, it records:

康默記, ... 少為薊州衙校, 太祖侵薊州得之, 愛其才, 隸麾下. 一切蕃漢相涉事, 屬默記折衷之, 悉合上意.

時諸部新附, 文法未備, 默記推析律意, 輪決重輕, 不差毫厘. ... 始建都, 默記董役, 人咸勸趨, 百日而訖事.²⁶³

Kang Moji, ... was an officer in Jizhou when he was young. He was captured (by Abaoji) when emperor Taizu (Abaoji) invaded Jizhou. (Abaoji) put him under his jurisdiction for cherishing his talent and ability. (Kang) Moji was ordered to deal with the matters, which had something to do with the relations between the barbarians and the Han Chinese. All he did suited (Abaoji) fine.

At that time, all (Khitan) tribes were newly united; the legal system had not been completed yet. (Kang) Moji made judgments properly by analyzing the law (of the Tang Dynasty). ... When it started to build the capital city, (Kang) Moji supervised the labors, and people all were encouraged to hasten forward. The work was finished in only one hundred days.

It can be seen that the contributions Kang Moji made for the Khitan were mainly in coordinating relations between the barbarian peoples and the Han Chinese; drafting the criminal law by using the legal institutions of Chinese Tang Dynasty for reference and building walled cities. As for Han Yanhui, the *Liao Shi* records:

韓延徽, ... 幽州安次人 ... 延徽少英, 燕帥劉仁恭奇之, 招為幽州府文學, 平州錄事參軍, ... 授幽州觀察支度史.

後守光為帥, 延徽來聘 太祖召與語, 合上意, 立命參軍事. 攻党項, 室韋, 服諸部落, 延徽之籌居多. 乃請樹城郭, 分市里, 以居漢人之降者. 又為定配偶, 教懇藝, 以生養之. 以故逃亡者少.²⁶⁴

Han Yanhui was from Anci of Youzhou ... (Han) Yanhui was outstanding when he was young. The commander of Yan Liu Rengong treasured him, and granted him many official titles in charging literature, military and financial affairs.

²⁶³ *Idem* 74. 1230.

²⁶⁴ *Idem*. 1231.

Later, when (Liu) Shouguang was the commander of Youzhou, (Han) Yanhui was dispatched (to the Khitan) for asking support ... Emperor Taizu called in and talked with him. (What he said) suited the emperor well. He was appointed an official in charging the military affairs. (Han) Yanhui made most of the preparations and strategies, when (the Khitan) attacked the Dangxiang and Shiwei, and frightened some other tribes into subservience. He also asked for building up walled cities, and dividing markets and alleys, for settling the subdued Han Chinese. In addition, (he) also selected spouses for them, and taught them cultivation skills, for breeding them up. Therefore, fleers became fewer.

The contributions made by Han Yanhui were mainly in building walled cities, scheming to provide strategies for the Khitan foreign invasions, and for putting down the internal rebellions. The deeds of Han Zhigu is recorded in the *Biography of Han Zhigu* of the *Liao Shi*, it reads:

韓知古，薊州玉田人，善謀有識量。太祖平薊時，知古六歲，為淳親皇后兄欲穩得之 ... 太祖召見與語，賢之，命參謀議 ... 久之信任益篤，總知漢兒司事，兼主諸國禮儀。時禮儀疏闊，知古援據古典，參酌國俗，與漢儀雜就之，使國人易知而行。²⁶⁵

Han Zhigu was from Yutian of Jizhou. He was of resource and astuteness. When emperor Taizu conquered Jizhou, (Han) Zhigu was six years old, and he was captured by Yuwen, empress Chunqin's elder brother. (Later) emperor Taizu called in and talked with him thought that he was wise and able, and asked him to participate in making strategies and decisions ... Later, (emperor Taizu) trusted him even more, ordered him to take charge of the affairs of the department of the Han people, and also managed the protocols of foreign states. At that time, the etiquette was far from completed, (Han) Zhigu formulated (some etiquette) mixed with Chinese rites and by consulting the ancient (Chinese) institutions and the (Khitan) national folk customs, it was made easier to be understood and practiced by the Khitan people.

The contributions Han Zhigu made was in managing the affairs of the department of the Han people and formulating the new Khitan etiquette, which was mixed the the traditional Chinese rites with the Khitan folk customs. According to the *Liao Shi*, "the department of the Han people (Han'er Si)" took charge of military affairs of the Han Chinese.²⁶⁶ Since the principle of the governmental organization of the Khitan state is "using ethnic system to govern the Khitan people while using Chinese institutions to govern Chinese people",²⁶⁷ managing the department of Han people, therefore, meant that Chinese military institutions and art of war were used to deal with the military affairs of Chinese in the Khitan state.

From the above descriptions, it can be seen that Abaoji's placing some Chinese intellectuals in important positions of his administration indeed produced an inestimable role in transforming the Khitan tribal confederation into an imperial state. It was because of the contributions that these Chinese intellectuals

²⁶⁵ *Idem.* 1233.

²⁶⁶ *Idem* 47. 773.

²⁶⁷ *Idem* 45. 685.

made, that the Khitan state appeared in an embryonic form as early as the beginning years of their state. The reasons why Abaoji put these Chinese intellectuals in important positions of his administration can be summarized into two points: On the one hand, in order to break free from the old tribal tradition and to establish a Chinese styled centralized political system, Abaoji had to make use of Chinese culture, ideology and institutions as powerful weapons to break through the obstacles caused by the old tribal forces. As Barfield says, "using Chinese rules to weaken tribal autonomy".²⁶⁸ On the other hand, since there were hundreds of thousands of Chinese and other sedentary subjects under the jurisdiction of the Khitan state, Chinese governmental institutions, therefore, were needed to control these peoples. Furthermore, Chinese governmental institutions needed Chinese officials who understood them well enough to practice in governing these sedentary populations.

It was because Abaoji relied on the property produced by Chinese agriculture as an economic basis, made use of the Confucian ideology of hierarchy and centralized imperial power as a theoretical foundation, and was dependence on his "abdomen & heart tribe", which consisted of two thousand brave warriors from different Khitan tribes, and the Shiwei and Tuhun's troops, as military force, that he succeeded in founding an imperial state. Chinese cultural influence could be, therefore, regarded as an important external impact on Abaoji's founding of the Khitan state.

²⁶⁸ Barfield 1989, p. 167.

CHAPTER 7. THE KHITAN AND TANG CHINA

7.1. The General Political Constellation

During the period from the 7th to 9th Centuries, the Khitan were at their later stage of the pre-dynastic period. Due to complex ecological conditions, the Khitan economic basis was built mainly upon animal husbandry mixed with hunting, fishing and possibly rough agriculture. Their political organization had been developing into a tribal confederation from tribal level. The territory of the Khitan at that time was located roughly in southern Manchuria, to the south, adjoining the Tang China; and to west, neighboring earlier the two Turkish empires (the first 553-630; the second 682-745), later the Uighur empire (745-840), on the steppe. Having been pastoral nomads, the Khitan glorified in military adventures. Taking advantage of their military power, they had been seeking chances to create their own autonomy, particularly in the first half of this period (618-755), even though all these attempts were finally put down by either of their two great neighbors using the policy of containment.

Meanwhile, their adversary, the Tang China, was the world's largest agrarian state, which advanced in culture, economy and political institution. Some emperors, especially in the first half of the Tang period (618-755), were very ambitious of being the masters of a reunified Chinese Empire. Under the expansionist foreign policy, the Tang China repeatedly mounted campaigns against its surrounding neighbours. In the second half of the Tang period, however, the Tang Dynasty was going into decline, because of serious internal problems and external troubles. Under such circumstances, having been close neighbours, it was inevitable that the Khitan and Tang were in contact with each other and able to interact with each other.

In the Tang period, particularly in the first half of it, the conflicts, most of them were armed conflicts, occurred frequently and sharply between the Khitan and Tang China, and proved fairly complicated. The Khitan allied themselves alternately with Chinese and the Türks. In this relationship, the peaceful submissions, tribute-bestowal activities, and marriage alliances were intermingled with armed conflicts. However, the conflicts seemed to be more important compared to the peaceful relationships. The consequences of these conflicts can be described by the following: The Khitan had been contained and failed to establish their autonomy during the Tang period, while the Tang's financial resources and military forces had been nearly exhausted, and its ambition to completely conquer the Khitan and even southern Manchuria failed.

As for the essential and common reasons, which dictated the long history of Chinese-nomadic conflict, numerous researches have been carried out by the both Chinese and Western scholars. See the *Introduction* of Jagchid & Symons 1989

and Di Cosmo 1994 for details.¹ Among the above various perspectives, Jagchid & Symons's and Barfield's are the most intriguing and influential. As concluded by David Wright, Jagchid & Symons's is "a manifestly economic argument", while Barfield's is "an essentially political argument".² Jagchid attributes the reasons of the sino-nomadic conflicts to nomadic peoples' dependency on Chinese material goods. On the other hand, Barfield "looks at the problem from a different perspective".³ He believes that the nomadic empires used the extortion of Chinese Luxury items as a means to stabilize their central political power. Nevertheless, the historical reality was more complicated. In addition to the more manifest economic and political concerns as mentioned above, there may have been some other elements, such as internal strife among the nomads, misunderstandings between nomads and Chinese, possibly influence from a third force and so on, that could be also considered as reasons of the sino-nomadic conflicts. Barfield's is more reasonable and convincing, according to Wright.⁴

In this chapter, what will be specifically focused upon are the particular and direct causes of the Khitan-Tang conflicts. On this specific topic, little research has been done. Within the available materials, from ancient times to present, scholars have proposed different arguments and explanations concerning the causes of the Khitan-Tang conflicts. First of all, from the traditional Confucian historians' point of view, all of those conflicts between Chinese and the "barbarians" were stirred up by the "barbarians". Liu Xu *et al.* attributed the causes the conflicts to the Khitan's barbarian nature.⁵ The alien nomads were considered to be uncivilized, crude, intractable and occasionally treacherous. On the other hand, the nomads were viewed naturally bellicose and aggressive as well. In the Khitan-Tang relationship, they believe that the conflicts were surely provoked by the Khitan's raiding border, and caused by their conducts of invasion, for "their (the Khitan) arrogance and savagery were the strongest in all of the barbarians."⁶ The modern scholar Cen Zhongmian maintains that the Khitan and Xi (it is also called Kumo Xi in the historical sources before the Sui Dynasty) people were not obedient to their overlords (the Tang court), and they "plotted to revolt against (the Tang) and schemed to seize the state (the Chinese territory). This was virtually invasive behaviour."⁷ Secondly, some scholars have tried to find the general causes in the confrontations between nomads and Chinese, from an

¹ Jagchid & Symons 1989, pp. 1-23; Di Cosmo 1994, pp. 1092-1096.

² Wright 1995, p. 296.

³ Wright 1995, p. 295.

⁴ *Idem*, p. 303-308.

⁵ *JTS* 199. 5364.

⁶ *SS* 84. 1881.

⁷ See Cen, Zhongmian 1982, p. 286.

economic perspective. Jagchid & Symons state, "For more than two millennia, trade had been the essential element that determined whether peace or war existed along China's northern frontier".⁸ In addition, Sinor claims, "First and foremost, the conflict was thus economically motivated".⁹ This theory is abbreviated as the "trade and raid" theory.¹⁰ Finally, some modern Chinese historians attribute the causes of the Khitan-Tang conflicts simply to the unwise policies carried out by both the Khitan and Tang courts. Cui Mingde claims that these conflicts were caused totally by the Tang court and local officials' faults in carrying out the policy towards the Khitan,¹¹ while Shu Fen argues that improper measures adopted by both sides, aroused the conflicts.¹²

The historical reality actually was more complicated than later generations imagined. In general, each of intensification of contradiction could be promoted by many-sided reasons. In this chapter, by taking the Khitan as major part of this research, I will attempt to approach this topic from wider angles: the internal economic and social development of the Khitan; the external influence from the powerful neighbouring nomads the Türks and their containment, or even provocation from their adversary the Chinese Tang Dynasty. Practically, I will choose four main periods of the Khitan-Tang conflicts, and analyse them separately. My research will be concentrated on the principal elements of causes in each period.

The aim of this study is to show the processes of the conflicts between the Khitan and China, and to analyse the causes of these conflicts, in order to explore the policies these two sides practised towards each other, especially the Khitan policy towards the Tang China prior to the founding of the Liao Empire, and furthermore to more deeply understand the historical aspect of the Khitan-Tang relationship. This study also would hopefully to provide some leads for further studies on the traits of the pre-dynastic Khitan.

7.2. The Beginning of the Conflict

At the beginning of emperor Tang Gaozong's reign (650-683), the pro-Chinese supreme chieftain Kuge died and the Khitan revolted against the Tang together with the Xi. Unfortunately, the details about this revolt and the exact date cannot be found in the historical data. The Chinese response was a punitive expedition against the Khitan soon after. In the fourth month of 660, Emperor Gaozong sent Ashide Shubin of Turkish origin as the commander in chief to attack the Khitan.

⁸ Jagchid & Symons 1989, p. 1.

⁹ Sinor. In Sinor, ed., 1990, p. 4.

¹⁰ Di Cosmo 1994, p.1093. p. 1095.

¹¹ Cui, Mingde 1991, p. 70-72.

¹² Shu, Fen 1984, p. 38.

The result of this campaign was that the Governor-general of Songmo, Abugu, was captured and sent to Dongdu (the eastern capital of the Tang, corresponding to modern Luoyang).

The direct cause of this incident has not been proved clearly in the historical records. With the help of other related materials, I will attempt to dig out some clues in order to make a reasonable propose.

In the third month of 660, just two month earlier of the Tang attack on the Khitan, because of the Paekche (Baiji)'s¹³ frequent invasions upon the Silla (Xinluo) in support of the Koryŏ (Gaoli), the Tang court sent Su Dingfang as a commander in chief to attack the Paekche.¹⁴ Meanwhile, as a part of this operation, the Tang court also sent Xin Wenling as a general to comfort the Koryŏ by commanding an army¹⁵. The actual meaning of "comfort" here is a warning, due to "by commanding an army". This means that the Tang warned the Koryŏ not to support Paekche. Unfortunately, when Xin Wenling reached the Tuhuzhen River on the way to the Koryŏ, his army suffered a surprise attack from the Koryŏ army, and failed.

The Tuhuzhen River was also called "Beimie Limoli" or "Taowei Simoli" by the Khitan people and "Tuhe River" by Chinese in the ancient times.¹⁶ It corresponds to the modern Laoha River within the boundaries of Inner Mongolian Automatic Region. The *Sui Shu* states that at the end of the Sui Dynasty the Khitan "resided along the Tuohechen River (identical to the Tuhuzhen River, for "Tuohechen" and "Tuhuzhen" are similar in Chinese pronunciation).¹⁷ The *Qidan Guozhi* also claims that the Tuhe is one of the two rivers within the Khitan territory.¹⁸ It is, therefore, quite clear that the Tuhuzhen River was within the territory of the Khitan. It probably arouse the Tang's suspicion that the Khitan colluded with the Koryŏ to obstruct an aggressive operation of the Tang in the Korean peninsula. The Khitan had been Chinese vassals since 648. Only a couple of years ago, the Khitan had assisted the Tang army to invade the Koryŏ.¹⁹ At this time, however, the Khitan were suspected to be on the side of the enemy and betrayed the Tang court. The Tang court was strongly infuriated, so that a punitive expedition was sent against the Khitan immediately.

¹³ In the seventh to eighth centuries, the Korea peninsula was in a divided situation. Three states, the Koryŏ (Gaoli), the Paekche (Baiji) and Silla (Xinluo) coexisted in the Korea peninsula. The Koryŏ occupied the great northern part of it, Paekche on the southwest, and Silla was in between of the other two.

¹⁴ *JTS* 83. 2779.

¹⁵ *Idem* 77. 2671.

¹⁶ *LS* 39. 481; *QDGZ* Preface. 1.

¹⁷ *SS* 84. 1882.

¹⁸ *QDGZ* Preface. 1.

¹⁹ *ZZTJ* 200. 6309.

It had already evoked the Tang's resentfulness that the Khitan submitted to the Türks after Kuge's death. However, the Tang was engaged in an aggressive expansion over the Korean peninsula at that moment, so that the Khitan were temporarily ignored. The incident that the Tang army suffered a surprise attack within the territory of the Khitan provided the Tang court an excuse to attack the Khitan. Therefore, it can be surmised that the direct cause of this incident was the retaliation of the Tang for their suffering a surprise attack launched by the Koryŏ within the territory of Khitan.

7.3. The Li-Sun Rebellion

The process of the conflict. The Khitan had been Chinese vassals for almost half a century since 648, in spite of occasional conflicts between them. As a Governor-general of Yingzhou, Zhao Wenhui was so self-willed that he humiliated and rode roughshod over his Khitan subordinates on many occasions.²⁰ Moreover, he regarded the Khitan chieftains as servants.²¹ The Khitan chieftain Sun Wanrong and his brother-in-law, regional governor of Songmo, Li Jinzhong, were insulted and bullied by Zhao Wanhui.²² Therefore, these Khitan leaders had developed a widespread resentment against this local Chinese governor. In 696, when a serious famine occurred in the Khitan region, Zhao Wanhui failed to pay relief that should have been paid in accordance with the "loose rein" policy of the Tang. This is the incident that touched off the rebellion, which was the biggest conflict in the Khitan-Tang relationship and a remarkable event in the history of the Tang Dynasty.

In the fifth month of 696, the Khitan response was an aggressive rebellion against China. Soon after, Yingzhou was captured by the Khitan. Li Jinzhong then declared himself "Wushang Kehan" (paramount khaghan). Sun Wanrong was appointed general, leading tens of thousands of troops to advance to the south. The Khitan swept away all enemy resistance. The Tang's response was a punitive expedition against the Khitan with twenty-eight generals. In the eighth month, the Khitan defeated the Tang troops in Xiashi Gorge (near modern Lulong County of Hebei Province). Two chief-generals Zhang Yuxuan and Ma Renjie were captured. The Tang troops had suffered a crushing defeat. Empress Wu Zetian was very shocked. She issued a decree soon after: "All the valiant among prisoners and servants must be forced to attack the Khitan. The official reward will come afterward according to everybody's deserts."²³ Even so, the Tang troops

²⁰ *XTS* 219. 6171.

²¹ *ZZTJ* 205. 6505.

²² *JTS* 199. 5350.

²³ *ZZTJ* 205. 2507.

failed in most of the battles until Li Jinzhong died of disease. Just at the right time, the Turkish Mochuo khaghan asked to be son of empress Wu and an imperial marriage for his daughter. Furthermore, he eagerly claimed that he would like to assist the Tang in defence from the Khitan. However, the repayment he required was that the subdued Turkish households in Hexi should be totally returned back to him. Empresses Wu finally accepted all of his demands.

In the tenth month of this year, the Tang attacked the Khitan army in the south while the Türks took advantage of Li Jinzhong's death to invade the Khitan homeland. The Khitan then suffered a heavy blow. In such a critical situation, Sun Wanrong took the place of Li Jinzhong, restoring the prestige of the army. The Khitan continuously stormed into Jizhou and Yingzhou, shaking the whole region of Hebei (covered the area north of the Yellow River from modern). In the third month of 697, Wang Xiaojie, Su Honghui and others were appointed generals, leading a 170,000 strong army to fight with the Khitan in the east Xiashi Gorge. Finally, the chief-general Wang Xiaojie was killed and the Tang troops were utterly defeated. Following up this victory, the Khitan captured Youzhou, another Chinese frontier garrison south of Yingzhou, marching deep into the Tang territory.

In the fifth month of 697, empress Wu again dispatched Lou Shide and Shatuo Zhongyi to command 200,000 soldiers against the Khitan. Sun Wanrong advanced to the south even further, invading several subordinate counties of Yingzhou. Just at the same time, however, something contrary to the Khitan's expectations was happening. The Türks refused an alliance with the Khitan, assaulting and plundering Khitan's new city, Xincheng, see *Materials* {40(15)} for details. Simultaneously, the Khitan's kinsmen the Xi betrayed the Khitan to China. The poor Khitan fell into an extremely difficult situation: their rear was being ravaged by the Türks, and their troops at the front were caught in a two-way squeeze by the Tang and the Xi. Soon after, Sun Wanrong fell into a *cul-de-sac*, and was killed by his servant. Ultimately, the rebellion collapsed and the remnant Khitan tribesmen gave their allegiance to the Türks together with the Xi.

Even though the trouble did not end completely. The aftermath of this rebellion lasted about fifteen years. During the period of 700 to 714, the Tang mounted several campaigns against the remaining forces of the Khitan. Meanwhile, the Khitan also constantly harassed the frontier region of the Tang, allied alternately with the Türks and the Xi. Consequently, the Khitan succeeded most of those fights. See *Materials* {41} for more details.

The causes of the conflict. 1. The direct cause. The direct cause of this formidable rebellion is recorded very clear in the historical data. When Li Jinzhong was the Governor-general of Songmo and Sun Wanrong was the prefect of Guicheng prefecture, a Chinese official over them was the Governor-general of Yingzhou,

named Zhao Wenhui. Zhao Wenhui was a self-willed and arrogant man who mistreated the Khitan. When the Khitan were on the verge of starvation, he refused to give any relief supplies. Moreover, he had even treated the Khitan chieftains like slaves. This kind of attitude infuriated the Khitan. This stirred up a serious rebellion.

2. The influence of the Türks. Let us have a review of the situation of the Türks at the end of the 7th Century. After the Eastern Turkish Empire fell in 630, the northern frontier of China Proper had remained quiescent for about half a century. In 679 some hundred thousands Türks rebelled against the Tang's control in the region beyond the northern border of China Proper. More over they even instigated the Khitan and the Xi to invade Yingzhou at the same time.²⁴ This revolt was crushed at the end of 681, after great loss of life on both sides. However, only one year later, the remnants of the eastern Turkish forces were reunited by Ashina Guduolu, a descendent of Jieli. He declared himself Turkish khaghan, and soon after he successfully established autonomy on the steppe. This was the so-called second Turkish Empire. When he died in 691, his brother Mochuo, who embarked on an ambitious scheme to revitalize the hegemony over the steppe, succeeded him. In the course of expansion, plundering human beings and wealth had become a shortcut for the Türks to strengthen their internal power, both in economy and in military force. Having been their close neighbors to the east, the Khitan inevitably became one of exploitative targets of the Türks in Manchuria, while China (that advanced in economy and culture) was troubled by an extortion strategy of the Türks.

During Mochuo's reign, which coincided with the Khitan Li-Sun rebellion, the Turkish policy of "robbery and extortion" was developed to a very high level. In order to expand their power, the Türks incited the Khitan to fall into a war against the Tang, and forced the Khitan to surrender to them²⁵. Taking advantage of this turbulence, they gained benefits from both sides after the war had been stirred up. On the other hand, the Türks were not willing to see a new power as their potential rival rise up. For these reasons, the Türks who, were at war with China, changed sides to aid the Tang to crush the Khitan. The records in *Materials* {40(15)} reflect that taking advantage of the warfare between the Khitan and the Tang, the Türks attacked the rear base of the Khitan and rooted a large number of human beings and enormous wealth. From these the Turk's population got increased and their power got strengthened. In addition to getting benefits from the Khitan, the Türks extorted great benefits from China. After Mochuo asked to aid China to attack the Khitan, he was granted several titles, including great

²⁴ *Idem* 202. 6392.

²⁵ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 101.

general, khaghan, and a noble's rank. Even this could not satisfy the Türks. In the third month of 697, Mochuo extorted the Tang court furthermore by frequently raiding the Chinese borders. Finally he got the several thousands of subdued Turkish households, who had submitted to the Tang in the reign period of Xianheng (670-674) and arranged by the Tang in six Chinese northern border prefectures, back to his own control. Besides, he also got a large amount of Chinese products including seed-grain, silk, farming implements, iron, and even an imperial marriage. See *Materials* {40(8), (11)} for details.

3. The policy of the Tang court. Coinciding with this Khitan rebellion, the Tang was under empress Wu's reign (684-704). As early as the latter half of its predecessor emperor Gaozong's reign, empress Wu had been already in an actual power, because of the weakness of the emperor. Empress Wu was strong-willed, so that she embarked upon an ambitious scheme to keep or to resume the Tang's foreign influence, which had risen to the peak in emperor Taizong's reign, over the neighboring peoples. Under empress Wu's rule, the foreign policy she carried out was a continuation of Taizong's expansionist foreign policy. Under this policy, a series of military campaigns had been mounted on the western Türks in the northwest, the Korean peninsula in the east, the Tibetans in the southwest and the eastern Türks in the north, during the latter half of the 7th Century. Most of these campaigns favoured China.

Under such circumstance, any rebellion of the subdued peoples would not be tolerated in any case. Once a rebellion took place, the response of China would be only an armed suppression. When the Li-Sun rebellion erupted in 696, the Khitan immediately suffered a repression from China with almost all its strength. According to the *Zizhi Tangjian*, empress Wu immediately sent twenty-eight generals to fight back. The result of this operation was that Li Jinzhong declared himself a khaghan and Yingzhou was captured.²⁶ This was a symbol that the Khitan proclaimed their independence from Tang control. The conflict then sharpened. Moreover empress Wu sent totally 370,000 soldiers to force against the Khitan within just less than one year. An edict was even issued to make the offer of amnesty and heavy rewards to convicts and private slaves who would be enrolled in the army, for repressing the Khitan. On several occasions in the following ten years, hundreds of thousands of soldiers again and again were sent against the remaining Khitan tribes.

On the other hand, however, due to several decades of straining the Tang's military capacity beyond reasonable limits in making those conquests, and over extending its defence, the Tang faced increasingly serious financial difficulties. Therefore, up to the end of the 7th Century, Chinese military power was no longer

²⁶ *ZZTJ* 205. 6506.

had overwhelming superiority. The Tang and Khitan matched each other in strength. This is why such a sharp conflict could occur. Actually, the Khitan were superior to the Tang in real military strength, because the Tang's success of crushing this rebellion was supported by the Türks and Xi.

In my opinion, the conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang during the Li-Sun rebellion, was instigated by the Türks, directly stirred up by a Chinese local official over the Khitan and was intensified by the expansionist foreign policy of empress Wu's administration, in addition to the Khitan's aggressive response.

7.4. The Revolting of Ketuyu

Process of the conflicts. During the time of the Khitan king Suogu, the military chief was Ketuyu. Ketuyu was so valiant that he was beloved and supported by the Khitan people. Suogu was both jealous and in fear of him and plotted to murder him. When this scheme was disclosed, an internal coup occurred within the Khitan ruling class. In 720, Ketuyu commanded troops to attack Suogu. Suogu lost and fled to Yingzhou to seek Chinese protection. The Governor-general of Yingzhou, Xu Qinzhan, ordered General Xue Tai to send a punitive expedition against Ketuyu in alliance with the Xi. Finally, Suogu and the Xi king Li Dapu were killed and Xue Tai was captured by Ketuyu. The area of Yingzhou was strongly shocked. Thus Ketuyu enthroned Suogu's cousin Yuyu to be the Khitan king.

Under the Khitan king Shaogu, Ketuyu was sent to present tributes to the Tang court. The official in charge Li Yuanhong mistreated him with rudeness. As a result, in the fifth month of 730 Ketuyu murdered the pro-Chinese Khitan king, and led his subjects and the Xi people to pledge allegiance to the Türks, showing his hostility to China. The imperial court was so panic-stricken in facing such a formidable enemy that they recruited warriors for the army from different regions of Guannei, Hedong, Henan and Hebei, and appointed the Prince of Zhong Jun commander in chief, leading eighteen generals to attack the Khitan and Xi. From then, the Khitan suffered several punitive expeditions conducted by the Tang army.

Soon after submission to the Türks, Ketuyu raided Pinglu, a Tang frontier army set in Yingzhou in 719 for defending against the Khitan and Xi. This incursion was repulsed by general Wu Chengci in Mount Nalu. In the third month of 732, the Prince of Xin'an, Wei, defeated the Khitan and Xi, and captured a great deal of tribesmen. Ketuyu fled far away with his troops, while the Xi leader, Li Shi Suogao led 5,000 subjects to submit to the Tang. The imperial court granted Li Shi titles of the Prince of Guiyi (the prince with allegiance and righteousness) and prefect of Guiyi Zhou. The court also settled his tribes within the territory of Youzhou. In the fourth month of 733, Guo Yingjie was ordered to

attack the Khitan by commanding 10,000 soldiers and the subdued Xi people. Ketuyu came to meet them head-on with support of the Türks. Under this circumstance, the Xi wavered, and abandoned the war to protect themselves. Thus, the Tang troops were disadvantaged. Soon after, Guo Yingjie and almost all his soldiers were killed on the battlefield. In the second month of 734, the regional commander of Youzhou, Zhang Shougui, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Khitan. In the twelfth month of 734, being frightened by the frequent attacks from the Tang army, Ketuyu pretended to surrender. Another Khitan military official, Li Guozhe who was persuaded by the Tang envoy Wang Hui, murdered Ketuyu and the Khitan king, Qulie, who was enthroned by Ketuyu to succeed Shaogu. This ended the conflicts between Ketuyu and the Tang.

Causes of the conflicts. What were the real causes of this series of conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang during the period from 720 to 734? Concerning this specific question, earlier researches have provided some explanations. The Japanese scholar Matsui Hitoshi suggested, "this rebellion of the Khitan was bred single-handedly by Ketuyu"²⁷. After Ketuyu killed Suogu, he enthroned Yuyu to be the Khitan king. This act was accepted by the Tang court. Matsui also maintained that this was because of the Tang's leniency. "The Tang still carried out a lenient policy, but it encouraged Ketuyu's arrogance ... Therefore, a motive for revolt came into being in Ketuyu's mind."²⁸ The Chinese expert Shu Fen states in his work "*Liao Shi Gao (The History of the Liao)*" that "both the Khitan's internal contradictions and the contradictions between one party of the Khitan nobles and the Chinese court focused on Ketuyu."²⁹

In my opinion, the principal cause of the conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang is that the Tang court interfered in the Khitan's internal affairs. During this very period, the Khitan were at the turning point of social transformation. The one-century lasted tribal confederation under the Dahe family was crumbling, for the tribes became scattered in the Li-Sun rebellion, while the newly organized confederation under the Yaonian family was going to take its place. As a chief military official, Ketuyu held great personal authority in the Khitan ruling class, and even manipulated the power of enthroning and deposing the kings (or supreme chieftains). When Ketuyu became the military chief, his braveness had won the Khitan people's respect. The kings such as Suogu and Tuyu were suspicious and jealous of him. Because of this, a series of coups began inside the Khitan. Although the Khitan was brought under the Tang suzerainty on several occasions and became the "loose rein" prefectures nominally, they actually en-

²⁷ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 103.

²⁸ *Idem.* p. 104.

²⁹ Shu, Fen 1984, p. 59.

joined self-government to a great extent. In its literal meaning, "loose rein" means "loose control" or "indirect control". The Tang "loose rein" policy, which was generally regarded as one of appeasement, provided a large degree of autonomy to the non-Chinese subjects in theory. As recorded in the *Xin Tangshu*, the "loose rein" prefectures were set according to those nomadic tribes, and their native chieftains served as heads of the prefectures that were permitted to pass their posts on hereditarily, and were allowed not to remit taxes and report population to the central government.³⁰ Specifically in 648 when the Khitan declared their vassalage to China, the "loose rein" policy was carried out according to the above institutions. In practice, however, under aggressive foreign policy in strong and prosperous period such as under emperor Xuanzong's rule, the Tang court tried to penetrate its influence deeper into the neighbouring tribes, thus far more directly controlling them. When an internal turmoil broke out inside the Khitan tribes, the Tang's response was to send armed forces to attack one of the two opposite parties. Such conducts obviously could be regarded as interfering in the Khitan's internal affairs.

Furthermore, by analysing the historical records of this incident, it can be found that the interference of the Tang court had gradually sharpened both the contradictions inside of the Khitan and the confrontations between the Khitan and China. In 720, Ketuyu attacked Suogu, and Suogu fled to Yingzhou to seek protection. The Governor-general of Yingzhou sent General Xue Tai in command of 500 valiant soldiers to attack the Khitan, with the support of the Xi people led by Li Dapu and the Khitan people led by Suogu. In addition, a several tens of thousand strong army was being mobilized from Guanzhong to reinforce this operation.³¹ This vigorous response brought about Ketuyu's excessive act. He killed the supreme chieftains of both the Khitan and Xi, and captured General Xue Tai. The situation favoured Ketuyu at this time, but it was he who stopped the conflict. Ketuyu might have thought that the continuation of the conflict would be disadvantage to himself, therefore he sent an envoy to humbly apologize to the Tang court. This illustrates that Ketuyu had no intention of aggravating the conflict any more, and that he also did not want to totally break relations with the Tang. Five years later, in 725, Ketuyu and the Khitan king Tuyu were again suspicious and jealous with each other, and Tuyu was forced to seek refuge in Yingzhou. At this time, the Tang carried out a lenient policy. Another Khitan king enthroned by Ketuyu was then confirmed by the Tang court. Consequently no conflicts had occurred at this time. This disproves that the Tang stirred up the conflicts during this period. Nevertheless in 730, when Ketuyu attended the court

³⁰ *XTS* 43. 1119.

³¹ *Idem* 37. 930.

in Chang'an on a tributary mission, he was rudely treated by chief minister Li Yuanhong. He felt badly humiliated. This rudeness made him determine to rebel against the Tang, and he surrendered to the Türks. In the eyes of the Tang emperor and his senior officials, such kind of treason to them could not be tolerated. Then several campaigns were mounted against the Khitan afterward. In the next five years, a series of military conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang had occurred in rapid sequence. As a consequence, Ketuyu was murdered by Guozhe who was a Khitan military chief from another tribe, and so the Tang got a short-term peace in the northeastern frontier, in spite of suffering heavy casualties.

The above survey shows that the interventionist foreign policy of the Tang court not only provoked Ketuyu's revolt, but also intensified and escalated those conflicts during this period.

7.5. An Lushan and the Khitan

An Lushan, a later rebel of the Tang, was a mix-blood foreigner living in Yingzhou. According to the *Biography of An Lushan* of the *Xin Tangshu*, his mother was a Turkish shamaness, got him by praying to Mount Zhaying.³² This record cannot be believed. What about his father has not been found in the Chinese historical data. Some Western scholars believe that his father was a Sogdian origin.³³ Since he was a hybridized non-Chinese living at Yingzhou, the settling place of the Khitan and Xi in the period of the Tang, it can be inferred that his origin might have had more or less relations with the Khitan or the Xi. The Japanese scholar Matsui Hitoshi states that "Perhaps (An Lushan) might have been of Khitan origin".³⁴ An Lushan succeeded in gaining favor with the Tang court by constantly attacking the Khitan and the Xi. He had been promoted from a petty official in charge of the frontier trade affairs to a very high frontier commander wielding great military power in the northern frontier of China.

Process of the conflicts. In the third month of 736, the regional commander of Youzhou Zhang Shougui sent his subordinate official An Lushan to attack the Khitan and Xi rebels. An Lushan's army was defeated, and An Lushan was almost killed by Zhang Shougui for his failure. In the eighth month of 740, it was reported to the imperial court that the Tang troops had defeated the Khitan and Xi. As a result of his successfully suppressing the Khitan, in the seventh month of 741 An Lushan was appointed the Governor-general of Yingzhou and commander of the Pinglu army, taking charge of the affairs of the northeastern frontier and overseeing the Khitan, Xi, Bohai, *etc.* In the first month of 742, he was promoted

³² *Idem* 225. 6411.

³³ Eberhard 1967, p. 184; Twitchett ed., 1979, p. 426.

³⁴ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 105.

regional commander of Pinglu (Pinglu Jiedu Shi), which was set for pacifying the Shiwei and Mohe. In the third month of 744, he was promoted as the regional commander of Fanyang (Fanyang Jiedu Shi), taking charge of controlling the Khitan and Xi and surrounding area. In the second month of 751, he was promoted regional commander of Hedong (Hedong Jiedu Shi) that was set for defending the Türks.

During the period of An Lushan having been a commander on the northeastern frontier, he frequently invaded and attacked the Khitan and Xi in order to curry favor with the Tang court. His crude oppression had evoked hostility and strong opposition from the Khitan and Xi people. In the ninth month of 745, the Khitan and Xi people murdered the Tang princesses who were married to the Khitan and Xi leaders only six months previously and revolted, claiming to revolt against the Tang. An Lushan defeated them afterward. In addition to military attacks, An Lushan often inveigled the Khitan and Xi people into a trap he had deliberately set in advance. He pretended to set a banquet for the Khitan and Xi people, and put some narcotic in the alcoholic drink. When the people were anaesthetized, An Lushan led warriors to kill them. He did this for several times. Each time, some thousands of people of the Khitan and Xi were killed; and their chiefs' heads were presented to the Tang court. In the eighth month of 751, An Lushan again commanded 60,000 troops to attack the Khitan, using 2,000 Xi people as guides. When war erupted, the Xi people turned traitor and went over to the Khitan. The Khitan army combined with the Xi troops to squeeze the Tang army and killed almost all of the Tang soldiers. An Lushan fled to Shizhou with only twenty subordinate cavalymen. The defending general Su Dingfang rescued An Lushan from the Khitan pursuit troops, and the Khitan were retreated back. Soon after, the Khitan laid a siege on Shizhou and An Lushan ordered Shi Siming to defeat them. In the third month of 752, in order to retaliate against the Khitan for the insult of last autumn's failure he suffered, An Lushan sent a 200,000 strong army, including both Chinese and barbarian infantry and cavalry units, to attack the Khitan. The details and result of this armed conflict cannot be found in the historical books. But after three years, in the fourth month of 755, An Lushan announced to the court that he had defeated the Xi and Khitan.

Cause of the conflicts. This time of conflicts (736-755) was also a stage of An Lushan's expanding military forces and his preparative period to revolt against the Tang court. During this period the Turkish Empire declining, the containment force from the Türks had been loosened and the Khitan turned to submit to the Tang again after having been Turkish vassals for half a century. However, the Khitan were forced to resist the Tang and even to revolt against them, because they suffered frequent attacks from the Tang frontier commander. Consequently continuous conflicts broke out between the Khitan and China during this period.

Simultaneously, the Tang Dynasty was undergoing a reform of its military system. Owing to more and more crucial frontier crisis, "no less than 85 percent of the empire's troops, and almost all its battle experienced soldiers, were under the control of the military governors."³⁵ This however does mean that there was a truly formidable force at the disposal of the central government for the frontier defence, but more and more military powers was concentrated in the hands of the frontier commanders for local defence. This process can be probably regarded as a beginning for the local separatist regimes in the period of the later Tang, and even the collapse of central authority in China in the next century. Under such conditions, the Khitan-Tang conflicts during this period were actually the confrontations between Khitan and the frontier commander, namely An Lushan.

From the above description on the process of the conflicts, it is not difficult to see that An Lushan's frequent provocative acts stirred up these repeated conflicts. There were two main purposes for An Lushan's deliberately provoking the Khitan. First, he was anxious to curry favor with the Tang emperor, so as to be rapidly promoted to higher post. Consequently his strength had been expanded, and finally he even had the power to manipulate the situation in the northeast of China. The second even more important purpose was making use of the Khitan and Xi captives to increase his military power, in order to revolt against the Tang and then establish his own independent autonomy. As recorded in the *Biography of An Lushan* of the *Xin Tangshu*, An Lushan "fostered more than eight thousand Tongluo, and subdued Khitan and Xi warriors as his adopted sons"³⁶ for preparing for his future rebellion. Additionally in the *Zizhi Tongjian*, it is recorded, "(An) Lushan led his subordinate troops and the Tongluo, Xi, Khitan and Shiwei (warriors). There were one hundred and fifty thousand people all together who declared two hundred thousand, rebelled in Fangyang".³⁷

After his rebellion erupted, An Lushan put all his efforts into dealing with the establishment of his new state, so that he had no surplus power to harass the Khitan. As a result, the Khitan no longer raided the Chinese borders, and the northeastern frontier remained unexpectedly quiescent until the end of the Tang Dynasty.

7.6. The Determinants in the Khitan-Tang Conflicts

The above historical perspective demonstrates that the Khitan-Tang conflicts were more frequent and sharper than other conflicts between China and its nomadic neighbours that most of these had happened in the first half of the Tang Dynasty

³⁵ Twitchett. In Twitchett ed., 1979, pp. 415-416.

³⁶ *XTS* 225. 6414.

³⁷ *ZZTJ* 217. 6934.

(618-755). Concerning the causes, they can be summarized by the following three points: (1). The interventionist policy of the Tang court and the local officials' mistreatments towards the Khitan were the main causes of the Khitan and Tang conflicts. (2). The Khitan's aggressive reactions and hostile attitude in response to the foreign provocations can be regarded as another reason, which caused and sharpened the conflicts. The Khitan's social-economic development and strong military forces were the basic elements on which the Khitan could rely to confront the powerful Tang Dynasty. (3). The Turk's expansion over the steppe and instigation at the time also externally impacted the Khitan-Tang relationship.

The Tang as a main provocateur in the Khitan-Tang conflicts. This is proved fourfold: first of all, in the first part of the Tang Dynasty, the economic and military strengths of the Tang were in an upward trend. Empress Wu and emperor Xuanzong were both strong-willed rulers who had great ambitions. The recovery of the Tang's foreign influence, which had risen to its peak in emperor Taizong's reign over the neighboring peoples, provided a motive for the Chinese expansionist operations. The foreign policy during this period proved generally to be more aggressive and invasive. Specifically, southern Manchuria was one of the expansionist targets, because of its significant geographic location. In the eyes of the Tang court, the territory where the Khitan and their kinsmen the Xi people lived was a stronghold for continuously expanding into the Korean peninsula and northern Manchuria. It was an essential strategic point, which the Tang had to struggle to control.

Secondly, in dealing with the northern frontier, the principle of the Tang policy was "coercing the two 'barbarians (the Khitan and the Xi)' into submission in order to contain the Türks." This means that the area of the Khitan and Xi was a stronghold also for the protection of Chinese settlement against the incursion of the Türks. In this sense, what the imperial court expected was that the Khitan would be always on the side of the Tang. Once the Khitan did not yield of in deterrence of the Tang authority, but surrendered to the Türks, the Tang's interests were offended. Under such circumstances, some punitive expeditions would immediately be sent against the Khitan. Thus it was inevitable armed conflicts would erupt.

Thirdly, in the ideology of Confucianism, the principle of the relationship of monarch and vassals is that the vassals must be absolutely subordinate to the monarch. Since the Khitan had accepted the "loose rein" and tributary status, in the eyes of the Tang emperors and officials, they had become Tang vassals and thus should be absolutely under the Tang subjection. Rebellion was regarded as treasonable and offensive behavior, and was definitely intolerable. When the Khitan revealed any indications of rebellious acts, due to suffering mistreatment from the Tang local officials, the response of the imperial court was surely a

punitive expedition against them. On the other hand, the classical Confucian tradition also stresses that the monarch has absolute right to render a judgment on the internal dispute of his vassals, even to punish the injustice conduct. The Khitan, however, had a totally different cultural background, such as distinctive life style, custom, system of organization, etc., which was extremely difficult for their so-called monarch, the Tang rulers, to deeply understand. In the eyes of Khitan, having been under the policy of "loose rein" meant that they could gain economic and financial supports and political and military protection from the imperial court without any other duties. In theory, according to the "loose rein" institution of the Tang, the subdued foreign tribes could possibly enjoy a great degree of self-government,³⁸ under the premise that the foreign peoples must show complete loyalty to the Tang court. But in practice, when the aggressive and interventionist foreign policy was carried out, the Tang rulers were anxious to bring the foreign peoples under their direct control. Therefore, their interference in the internal affairs of the foreign peoples was inevitable. Nevertheless, the Khitan's traditional military democratic system strongly conflicted with Chinese patriarchal autocracy. In case of the existence of cultural divergence, armed conflicts were inevitable when the Tang court insisted in interfering in the Khitan's internal affairs. Finally, the mistreatment of some Chinese central or local officials towards the Khitan leaders, for their own benefits or varying degrees of racial discrimination, always became direct causes for the Khitan-Tang conflicts.

Additionally, there is also a counter-evidence, which verifies the Tang's responsibility for the Khitan-Tang conflicts. In the *Description of the Khitan* of the *Xin Tangshu*, it is recorded, "From the period of Zhide (756-758) onward, the local separatist regimes concentrated on expanding their sphere of influence and taking care of their internal affairs. They fortified garrisons for defense even more cautiously and no longer made trouble beyond the frontier. Thus the Xi and Khitan very rarely raided the borders". See Materials {47} for more details. This record implied that before the period of Zhide, the Chinese frontier official, for example, the military governors of Fangyang who took control over the Xi and Khitan might have made some border troubles, which could cause the Xi and Khitan's invasion.

The reasons why the conflicts showed extremely severe. Although the Tang still remained strong and prosperous during the period from the second half of the 7th to the first half of the 8th Centuries, the situation with its surrounding neighbours had changed, compared with the Taizong's reign. The foreign states were getting stronger, gradually becoming troublesome and even dangerous enemies, in varying degrees. Chinese supremacy already had been challenged. In

³⁸ XTS 43. 1119.

order to counter such a thorny situation, the Tang court tried several times to strengthen its frontier defence. As a result, the Tang had to face increasingly serious financial difficulties. As well, more and more military forces were concentrated on frontier defence, which caused weakness in the central government. China gradually lost its superiority, becoming more and more equal to its neighbours than before. Meanwhile, with the social and economic development, and particularly with the support of Chinese bestowals and subsidies, the Khitan was getting stronger in its economy and military forces. This is why the conflicts between the Khitan and the Tang became extremely severe. It reflects that the strengths of these two sides were similar.

The influence of the Türks. At the end of the 7th Century, the Eastern Turkish Empire was re-established by Guduolu. Under the rule of Guduolu's brother Mochuo, this second Turkish Empire approached the size of the first one by incorporating more tribes, thus the Türks were again getting more powerful and aggressive. As the historical data record "its territory was more than 10,000 *li* (equal to 5,000 kilometres) wide from the east to the west. Some 400,000 subjects were under its control."³⁹ "Since empress Wu's reign, the Turkish Mochuo had become China's serious trouble. The imperial court faced a lot of problems to conquer the Türks even by emptying the fall strength under heaven."⁴⁰ As overlords on the steppe, the Türks always possessed an invisible containing force to their nomadic neighbours, basing upon the similarity of their cultural background. This might be part of the explanation why the Khitan always submitted to the Türks when the Türks were strong, even after defeated by the Tang with the support of the Türks; and why the Khitan submitted to the Tang while the Türks were on the decline or in dissolution. The Khitan felt very hard to get rid of the containment from the Türks all along. This containing force of the Türks, to some extent, manipulated the Khitan-China relationship. As early as 679, the Türks instigated the Xi and Khitan to raid and plunder Yingzhou, which was a Chinese garrison in the northeastern frontier. After the Li-Sun rebellion was crushed by the Tang with the support of the Türks, the Khitan and Xi broke relations with China and submitted to the Türks, see *Materials* {41(1)}. Moreover, the Türks sometimes provided support to the anti-Chinese Khitan leaders. For example, in the next year of Ketuyu's submission to the Türks in 730, the Türks supported the Khitan to counterattack the Tang's punitive expedition.

Because of the less troublesome and trade interested identity of the Uighurs, the Khitan remained relatively quiescent under Uighur control in the latter part of

³⁹ *JTS* 194. 5172.

⁴⁰ *ZZTJ* 211. 6724.

the Tang Dynasty. This verified that the Türks' pressure produced a remarkable external impact on the Khitan-Tang conflicts.

Furthermore, since the Khitan failed again and again in this series of conflicts, and finally suffered grievous losses in both property and population, the political development of the Khitan was obstructed consequently, to a great extent. The almost one century containment from the Tang China made the Khitan impossible to successfully become independent. This can be also regarded as one of the external causes, which made the Khitan spend over five centuries to create an autonomous regime. On the other hand, a speculation could be made. It was drawing a lesson from these failures, that the Khitan changed their foreign policy to a more conservative one in the later period of pre-dynastic history, particularly in the one-century period from the 760s to 860s.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION

8.1. The General Course of the Pre-dynastic Khitan History

The history of the pre-dynastic Khitan (388-907) can be seen as a trend of bilinear development. One line was the internal development which includes the ethnic affiliation, economic life and changes in tribal organization; the other was the foreign influences which include the ups and downs of the Khitan's neighboring peoples, the ever-changing balance of power between the powerful political forces, the Khitan relationships with them and the impacts these had on the Khitan. However, the line of foreign influence was more important in the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan. Since the pre-dynastic Khitan at the very beginning were some dispersed small tribes, their "political fate was largely determined by their far more powerful neighbors and by the ever-changing balance of power between the successive regimes ruling northern China".¹ Foreign invasions forced the Khitan tribes to unite again and again. As a result, their tribal organization became more and more sophisticated. Furthermore, Chinese products obtained through diplomatic means as well as trade and raids reinforced the economic basis of the Khitan. Consequently, the parallel development and interaction of these two lines of the pre-dynastic history finally resulted in the establishment of the Khitan Empire.

It is along these two lines that this study has made an effort to systematically and comprehensively investigate the five-century lasted history of the pre-dynastic Khitan. Particular emphasis had been, nevertheless, laid on the second line – the foreign influence on the pre-dynastic Khitan. First of all, in this study, almost all the Chinese historical materials on the pre-dynastic Khitan, which are scattered in about twenty different Chinese historical sources, have been collected and translated into English. This work has not only provided a basis of knowledge of the pre-dynastic Khitan to this study, but also has made it easier for the Western scholars in the field of Khitan studies to understand Chinese source materials on the pre-dynastic Khitan. Secondly, this study has attempted to explain some unsolved specific problems of the pre-dynastic Khitan history.

Regarding their origin and ethnic affiliations, through the historical survey and making use of the achievements of linguistics, archaeological and anthropological studies, it has been shown that the Khitan were more likely to have originated from a branch of the eastern section of the Xianbei, a part of the Xianbei people who had lived in Manchuria since the 2nd Century B.C., but not

¹ Twitchet & Tietze. In Franke & Twitchett, eds., 1994, p. 47.

Conclusion

the descendants of the Yuwen and had nothing to do with the Xiongnu in consanguinity. As for their social organization, the different situations of the tribal organization have been drawn out corresponding to the different historical periods. Concerning the debate about the existence of the Yaonian tribal confederation, I am inclined to the side that believes the Yaonian confederation did live during the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan. With regards to the composition of the Yaonian tribal confederation, a criticism has been made about the *Liao Shi* on its confused records about this issue. It has been made clear that the number of core tribes in the Yaonian confederation was still eight as before, but the tribal confederation had been re-organized and tribal names had been changed. They were the Yila, Yishi, Pin, Chute, Wukui, Niela, Tulübu and Tuju. The difference from before was that there were two administrations, the three Yelü clans and two Shenmi clans, which were over and controlled the core eight tribes. In addition, there was not a process, in which the number of core tribes developed from eight to twenty. The so-called twenty tribes were set up by emperor Taizu after the founding of the Khitan state. Moreover, the pattern of leadership succession in the pre-dynastic Khitan followed the Manchuria tradition of "hereditary election" developed from "democratic election", which meant to elect the most virtuous and able heir among the candidates who were always drawn from a single powerful lineage or family. It was a form of lateral succession between brothers rather than a form of lineal succession from father to son. In addition, the tradition of limited term of office remained in the succession to leadership at tribal level, when Yila was concerned. On their economic basis, the economic situations of the pre-dynastic Khitan in different historical periods have been discussed respectively, and Chinese properties including subsidies and loot from raids were emphasized as an important part of the economic basis of the pre-dynastic Khitan. In addition to the internal development of the pre-dynastic Khitan, the foreign relations between the pre-dynastic Khitan and their neighboring peoples have been also discussed and analyzed respectively from different viewpoints. Particular emphases on ethnic relations have been placed on their relationships with the Kumo Xi, Tuoba, and Shiwei, while particular emphases on political relations have been placed on their relationships with the Türks, Uighurs and the Han Chinese. Thirdly, the essential aim of this comprehensive and systematic investigation on the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan and explanations to some particular problems is to give explanations and answers to some general questions regarding them. As raised by professor Liu Fengzhu in the preface of Chinese translation of *History of the Rise of the Khitan* in the late 1970s: Why did the history of pre-dynastic Khitan last over five

centuries? How were the Khitan relations with their neighboring peoples? What are the internal and external conditions for the establishment of the Liao Empire?² These are indeed questions the researchers who study the history of pre-dynastic Khitan have to face, and basic questions need to be resolved in the field of pre-dynastic Khitan studies. Some attempts have been made by researchers to answer the above questions. But often, they are either one-sided or oversimplified; see 1.5. of Chapter 1 of this work for details. Based on the historical investigation on the pre-dynastic Khitan, and studies on some specific problems both in their internal development and foreign relations, this study has attempted to give reasonable or at least plausible answers to the above motioned general questions.

8.2. The Rise of the Khitan as a Historical Process

The reasons for the long-lasting pre-dynastic Khitan history. The pre-dynastic history of the Khitan lasted over five hundred years. It was likely the longest lived among the pre-dynastic histories of the foreign dynasties founded by Manchurian peoples in Chinese history. The reasons why it lasted so long can be explained respectively in the following categories.

First of all, the low level economic basis and fragmentary social organization were the internal reasons for this long lasting pre-dynastic period. The Khitan's homeland was located mainly in the Liaoxi steppe, which traditionally supported pastoral nomads. The ecological conditions determined that their dominant way of life was a pastoral nomadism. Stockbreeding was the mainstay of their economic basis supplemented by hunting and fishing. Such an economic basis was relatively unstable and not self-sufficient. It inevitably retarded the development of the pre-dynastic Khitan. In addition to the economic reasons, as one of Manchurian tribes, the Khitan carried on the Xianbei tradition of "a weak confederation with little supra-tribal leadership"³ in social organization in most of their pre-dynastic period. Such a fragmented social structure resulted in the Khitan tribes having more internal conflicts. For instances, according to *Materials* {19}, in 586 the Khitan tribes attacked one another for a long time; and from 720 through to 735, Ketuyu's coups and its repercussions brought the Khitan tribes into a temporary decline, see *Materials* {43} for details. These internal conflicts were bound to slow down the state-building process of the Khitan tribes. As well, the disunited social organization also made the Khitan tribes vulnerable to outside invasions. As Barfield describes in his work *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and*

² Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), p. 93.

³ Barfield 1989, p. 85.

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China, "Their small size and disunity prevented them from becoming a stable power like the Hsiong-nu (Xiongnu).⁴

Secondly, foreign attacks could be regarded as comparatively important reasons for the Khitan's long lasting pre-dynastic history. For most time of the Khitan's pre-dynastic period, the external situation was quite complicated and severe for the Khitan. They had to face the successive Chinese regimes to the south, the Ruoran followed by the Türks and then the Uighurs to become the successive dominators of the steppe to the north, and as well as some minor rivals, the Kumo Xi and Shiwei in Manchuria, and the Koryö (or Koguryö) in the Korean peninsula, for examples. Most of these rivals sometimes or often cherished feelings of hostility towards the Khitan. Continuous foreign attacks obviously restrained the Khitan's internal and external developments. Barfield concludes that, "every one of their numerous attempts to create an autonomous state was put down by China or a steppe empire, because neither was willing to see a new frontier power come into existence".⁵ The stronger neighboring political powers on the steppe, in China Proper, and even in Manchuria, the Khitan tribes successively suffered from external invasions throughout their pre-dynastic history. In 388, the Kumo Xi-Khitan tribal complex were defeated by the newly established Northern Wei. As a result, the Khitan broke away from the Kumo Xi, starting their independent history. In 479, after being threatened by the Koguryö, who were in alliance with the Rouran, a big tribe of the Khitan led by Wuyu submitted to the Northern Wei for protection. In 553, their invasion on the Chinese borders provoked a major punitive expedition mounted by the Northern Qi, resulting in a great loss in population and livestock. A few years later, having been pressed by the Türks, they resided temporarily in the territory of the Koryö with ten thousand families. In 605, they were disastrously defeated by the Sui allied with the Türks when they raided Yingzhou, leaving them a much reduced population. In 696, when the Khitan revolted against the Tang, the Tang responded with a large-scale punitive expedition in alliance with the Türks and Xi. The Khitan were finally defeated in 697 with massive casualties. As a consequence, the Khitan tribes became dispersed and went into decline. During the period when An Lushan was regional commander on the northeastern frontier from 745 to 755, the Khitan were frequently invaded and harassed by him for his currying favor with the Tang court, and inflicted heavy losses on the Khitan. Such kinds of foreign attacks again and again obstructed the Khitan's internal development, postponing their process of state building.

⁴ *Idem.* p. 105.

⁵ *Idem.* p. 168.

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Thirdly, It is surprising that the Khitan were not completely wiped out by any of these external political forces through their five hundred pre-dynastic history. The most important reason was that the long-term confrontation and containment between the successive Chinese regimes and nomadic dominators on the steppe objectively protected the Khitan from being eliminated. This was because both the opposing parties needed to draw the Khitan to their own side for their own political interests, military concerns or strategical considerations. For examples, in the Northern Wei Dynasty, in order to attack the Rouran until they could no longer pose a treat and to unify the north China at the beginning of their dynastic period, and in order to be engaged in their state building and internal reforms in the second half of their dynastic period, the Tuoba rulers tried every means to keep the northeastern frontier peaceful and stable. Concretely, the tributary system was restored, and the Khitan were brought under Tuoba control. With a smooth relationship with the Northern Wei, the Khitan not only obtained bestowals from the Northern Wei court and trade benefits from frontier market to finance their tribal economy, but also got the Northern Wei's protection when they were suffering from external threats and nature calamities. In the period of the Sui, the Türks were the most powerful threat to the Sui. The principle of the Sui foreign policy was "*liqiang er heruo* (leaving away from the stronger party while allying with the weaker one), *yuanjiao er jingong* (allying with those who are far away while attacking those who are close)".⁶ In concrete, it was to ally Manchurian tribes including the Khitan, Xi, Shiwei and Bai Xi to attack the much stronger Türks. The Sui policy towards the Khitan was, therefore, to welcome their submissions and to keep a smooth relationship with them. Under this policy, the scattered Khitan tribes gradually moved back and gathered in their old land. In the first half of the Tang period, the Khitan alternately gave their allegiance to the Tang and Türks, when either side was stronger. At the beginning of this period, with the establishment of the Tang Dynasty and the destruction of the first Turkish Empire, the Khitan submitted to the Tang, and were brought into the Tang tributary system, gaining rich bestowals from the Tang court. However, with the rise of the Second Turkish Empire in 680s, the Khitan leant to the side of the Türks. The rebellion against the Tang finally broke out in 696. Even though the revolt was put down by the Tang allied with the Türks, and the remnant Khitan attached themselves to the Türks. The Turkish protection prevented the Khitan from being totally destroyed by the successive Tang attacks for over ten more years. With the decline of the Second Turkish Empire, the Tang restored control over Manchuria in the beginning years of emperor Xuanzong's reign (712-755) and the Khitan returned to the Tang's rule. During the 720s to 730s, when the

⁶ ZZTJ 178. 5543.

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Türks temporarily recovered their strength, the Khitan revolted against the Tang and submitted to the Türks. After the dissolution of the Türks in 745, the Khitan turned again to become Chinese vassals. In the following years until the fall of the Tang in 907, both the internal and external problems were driving the Tang court to desperation. At the same time, the frontier military governors of Fangyang neighboring the Khitan concentrated on their own affairs and self-defense, while the Uighurs, who had succeeded the Türks as the lords on the Mongolian steppe until 840, were involved in extorting silk from the Tang court for financing their nomadic empire. It seems that none of them had surplus power to bring the Khitan into their political considerations. While accepting the suzerainty of the Uighurs, the Khitan still kept the tribute-bestowal relations with the Tang court. The Khitan also had a peaceful relationship with the frontier military governors. Under such peaceful relationship between the both sides, the Khitan accumulated their strength and started the process of state building. It was in the ever-changing balance of power between these two super powers, the Khitan subsisted, developed and even grew in strength.

The external and internal conditions for the rise of the Khitan. The establishment of the Khitan Empire was the final outcome from the development of the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan. The external conditions for the rise of the Khitan were the collapse of central authority both on the steppe and in China Proper. In the later years of the Uighur Empire, repeated internal conflicts added by natural calamities and spread of pestilences brought the Uighurs into decline. Taking advantage of such a situation, the Kirghiz, who were from the northern margin of the steppe, launched a deadly attack on the Uighurs in 840, bringing about the dissolution of the Uighurs. The Kirghiz, unlike the Türks and Uighurs, did not establish a central control over the steppe, but went back to their homeland to the north with the loot from the Uighur capital Karabalghasun. Therefore, the destruction of the Uighur Empire left a political vacuum on the steppe, freeing the Khitan from the long-term containment of the Türks followed by the Uighurs, their successive overlords on the steppe. On the other hand, the central authority in China had been also on the decline since the An Lushan's rebellion in 755. Numerous independent local regimes came into existence one after another, disintegrating the Tang Empire and threatening its central government. The Tang gradually lost control over Manchuria. The Khitan, therefore, became Uighur vassals, even though they still kept the tribute-bestowal relations with the Tang court. After the collapse of the Uighur Empire, the Tang central government lost the Uighur protection. These successive internal rebellions brought the Tang Dynasty to an end. Under such a situation, the Tang court found it impossible to restore control over Manchuria. The fall of the Tang in 907 marked the end of central authority in China. Almost at the same time, the Xi, whose power was

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greater than the Khitan for a time, became scattered, because their aggressive activities on the Tang border depleted their strength. Until then, the external obstacles to the Khitan's creation of autonomy had been cleared away. Taking advantage of the anarchy both in China and on the steppe, the Khitan started the transformation from a tribal confederation to an imperial state.

Actually, the meaningful internal construction of the Khitan started as early as the second half of the 8th Century. In appearance, the Khitan were under Uighur control during this period. However, Uighur control which mainly focused on economic exploitation, was in fact relatively loose in its political restriction, compared with Turkish control (refer to 6.5. of Chapter 6). The slack Uighur control, added to the decline of the central authority of China and the busy self-defense of the separatist regional regimes, provided the Khitan a loose external environment. Under such a favorable conditions, the Khitan gradually accumulated their strength to become a dominant force of northeast Asia in the future. After the collapse of the Uighurs in 840, the Khitan faced no opposition on the steppe. In appearance, the Khitan became vassals of the Tang. But in reality, the Tang had been already on the decline, losing capability to control the Khitan. The Khitan, actually, had no outside oppression. Taking advantage of the political vacuum on the steppe and anarchy in China, the Khitan started the process of state building, which could be regarded as internal conditions "that would lay the ground work for a new and powerful dynasty".⁷

In social organization, the Khitan tribes were re-organized, getting more cohesive under the rule of the Yaonian family. As early as the middle of the 8th Century, Nieli, the remote ancestor of Abaoji, conducted social reforms. He, "for the first time, formulated institutions, set up official bureaus, and excavated a cave as a prison".⁸ The Yaonian tribal confederation, therefore, already had some basic characteristics of an imperial state. In addition, the political standing of the Khitan leaders had been increased by drawing up some rites specifically for their supreme chief's taking up his post. Furthermore, the power of the military chief "Yilijin" had increased since Nieli.

In economy, Abaoji's ancestors, who successively were the leaders of the Yila tribe, had engaged in broadening their economic base since the middle of the 9th Century, making the Yila become a powerful tribe over the eight tribes of the Yaonian. Some years before founding the Khitan State, Abaoji built the first Han city on the upper reaches of the Luan River, for settling the Han Chinese refugees and captives. Abaoji made use of Chinese farmers among the refugees and captives to develop agriculture and salt-production, making his Yila tribe much

⁷ Barfield 1989, p.169.

⁸ LS 2. 24.

richer and economically that much more powerful than other Khitan tribes. It was relying on such an economic base, that Abaoji united the Khitan tribes and started conquest undertakings towards their neighboring peoples.

With regard military conquests, the Khitan started their foreign expansion when they had accumulated enough strength in the time of Xianzhi khaghan (860?-882?). Their Manchurian neighbors the Xi and Shiwei became their first targets. From the time of Abaoji (872-926), the Khitan foreign expansion was steadily becoming more extensive. Following successive conquests of the Xi, Bai Xi, Shiwei, Tartar and Jurchen, the Khitan turned to intrude into some Chinese counties on the northeastern frontier. As a result of such foreign expansion, the Khitan not only largely extended their territory, but also captured hundreds of thousands people. From these captives, most of the tribesmen were used to strengthen the Khitan military force, while the rest were used as laborers to increase the economic productivity of the Khitan. This was the military base for the rise of the Khitan.

In addition to this internal development of the Khitan in the fields of social organization, economy, and armed forces, Chinese cultural influence is also undoubtedly an important fact in promoting the transformation of the Khitan from a tribal confederation into a Chinese style bureaucratic dynasty. Gradual sinification enabled the Yila tribe to become more advanced in productivity and much richer than other Khitan tribes, making it eventually an economic base for Abaoji to unite the Khitan tribes and finally to control them. Those Chinese farmers helped to develop agriculture and its related occupations in the areas captured by the Khitan. In addition, some Chinese intellectuals among the refugees and captives created by the civil wars within the Chinese frontier regions and the Khitan foreign expansions, even brought to the Khitan the advanced Chinese ideology that made Abaoji abandon the Khitan tradition of egalitarianism in leadership succession and political order, and to adopt a centralized political system that built up the ideological foundation for the Khitan to establish a dynastic state.

8.3. The Political Principles of the Pre-dynastic Khitan

Throughout its more than five hundred years of pre-dynastic history, the Khitan had been continuously suffering from repressions from their much more powerful neighbors both in China Proper and on the steppe, and sometimes even from some stronger political forces in Manchuria. These strong political powers could have strangled the less sophisticated Khitan tribes in the cradle at any time. Nevertheless, with such long-term awkward situations, the pre-dynastic Khitan were not eliminated. On the contrary, they gradually accumulated considerable strength and consequently rose as a powerful empire as soon as the central power collapsed both in China and on the steppe. The foregoing paragraphs made some analyses of

the external situation and its impacts on the Khitan and the Khitan's internal development in their pre-dynastic period, and provided some convincing reasons for the rise of the Khitan and their related problems. Yet these explanations seem somewhat insufficient. There are probably still some other profound reasons for satisfactorily explaining these problems. In the process of my investigation of the pre-dynastic Khitan history, it gradually became noticeable that the implementation of a conservative policy towards the outside world ran through most of the history of the pre-dynastic Khitan until the 860s, particularly in the latter part of this period. Even though there were some occasions of aggressive actions taken by the Khitan in this period, most of them were not provoked by the Khitan. For instance, in the period of the Tang, almost all conflicts between the Khitan and China were caused by the Tang. See Chapter 7. for details. Practice of the conservative policy could possibly influence the external environment to develop in a direction that was favorable to the Khitan. This should be an important reason why the Khitan could prevent themselves from being eliminated by their stronger neighbors and they even accumulated incredible strength in their pre-dynastic period for founding an imperial state. In addition, this is also the key reason why it was the Khitan but not any other Manchurian people could possibly take advantage of the collapse of central order both in China and on the steppe to rise up as a dominant political force in northeast Asia.

Practices of the conservative policy. The following is an analysis on the specific practice of the conservative policy at each stage of the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan. From this, the developing course of how this policy gradually became mature will be also seen.

The Khitan's implementation of conservative policy can be traced back to the very beginning of their tribal history. According to the *Wei Shu's* record in *Materials* {7(1)}, in 388 the Kumo Xi tribal complex, in which the Khitan tribes were included, were disastrously defeated by the newly founded Northern Wei. As a result the Khitan split off from the Kumo Xi. However, the *Wei Shu* records that while the Kumo Xi suffered heavy losses from this attack, it does not mention any losses suffered by the Khitan. Refer to *Materials* {7(2)}. The *Wei Shu* also records the multiplication of the Khitan tribes and their frequent raids on the borders of the Northern Wei in the next a few decades, see *Materials* {9}. In addition to the record in the *Wei Shu*, the *Zizhi Tongjian* records a story that in 406 the leader of the Later Yan (a Murong Xianbei established political regime in north China from 383 to 407) cancelled a plan of campaign against the Khitan, for fear of their multitudinous population. From the above records, it can be seen that the Khitan had accumulated a considerable strength as early as 406, only eighteen years after the deadly attack from the Tuoba. In the next few decades, the Khitan continued to grow even further in strength, threatening the border peace of the

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Northern Wei on its northeastern frontier. How could the Khitan tribes recover so quickly from a formidable foreign attack and make further growth in population and strength? From the above historical records, a speculation can possibly be made, with regarding to this question. It was more likely that the Khitan probably did not resist as much as their kinsmen the Kumo Xi did, when they both were suffering the attack from the Northern Wei in 388, but fled away from the battlefield, preventing themselves from being destroyed by the formidable enemy. As recorded in the *Wei Shu in Materials* {7(1)}, "During the period of Dengguo, they were severely defeated by the imperial troops. Therefore *they fled in disorder and split off from the Kumo Xi*. Thus it could be inferred that the Khitan probably did not suffer such heavy losses from this attack as the Kumo Xi did, even though they were also defeated by the Northern Wei. This is why the Khitan could possibly recover and even increase their population and strength quite soon after the attack. In addition, it was because of their running away that the Khitan broke away from the Kumo Xi. This is probably the first example of the practice of the Khitan's conservative policy. On the other hand, the Kumo Xi showed much more aggression than the Khitan. They not only strongly resisted the Northern Wei attack, sustaining heavy losses, but also vigorously mounted a counterattack on the troops of the Northern Wei after only one month. They were defeated by the Northern Wei again.⁹ This is why the Kumo Xi suffered grievous losses in the war with the Northern Wei in 388.

Attaching themselves to any of the stronger neighboring forces for preserving their own strength was an important strategy adopted by the Khitan to concretely practice the conservative policy throughout their pre-dynastic period, particularly when they were suffering from external threats. Since they were defeated by the Northern Wei, the Khitan had submitted to the Northern Yan (a regime founded by Feng Ba in southern Manchurian from 409 to 436) for a period of time. In 479, when the Koguryō schemed with the Rouran for carving up the territory of the Didouyu (another Manchurian people who lived northwest of the Khitan), a big tribe of the Khitan led by Wuyu paid their allegiance to the Northern Wei, for fear of invasion of the Koguryō. Several years after they were disastrously defeated by the Northern Qi in 553, the Khitan were again threatened by the Türks. In desperation, some of the Khitan tribes submitted to the Koryō. The above cases all happened at the early stages of the Khitan's pre-dynastic period, the period of Ancient Eight Tribes. At that time, the tribal confederation had not yet formed, so that the Khitan tribes were scattered. Added to their low level of productivity, the power of the Khitan tribes was comparatively vulnerable to foreign invasions. On the verge of extermination on several occasions, the Khitan tribes did not

⁹ ZZTJ 107. 3364.

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stubbornly resist the enemies, but carried out their conservative policy of hiding themselves under the protection of the other more powerful forces. It is because of this that the Khitan tribes again and again were prevented from being strangled in the cradle from formidable foreign attacks.

In the Sui/Tang period, the powerful steppe that was ruled successively by the Türks and Uighurs, and the re-united China under the Sui/Tang Dynasties, maintained a bipolar world. In this bipolar world, the Khitan continued to practice the strategy of attaching themselves alternatively to the steppe empires and China to prevent themselves from being eliminated by any of the other powers. With the establishment of the Sui (589-618) and the re-unification of China, the Khitan tribes extricated themselves out of Turkish and Korean controls and submitted to Sui in succession. Under the Sui protection, the Khitan tribes gradually gathered in their old land north of the Laoha River, finishing their one-hundred-years of non-unification. This made the formation of tribal confederation possible for the Khitan. However, at the end of the Sui, the failures in three campaigns against Korea together with the endless civil war brought about the fall of the Sui. At the same time, the Turkish Shibi khaghan rose to power. By receiving numerous Chinese refugees and with the alliance of numbers of Chinese separatist regimes, the Türks under Shibi further increased in their strength. In this situation, the Khitan again became Turkish vassals. Taking the place of the Sui, the Tang Dynasty, which was even more powerful in its economy, politics and military, was founded in 618. In the beginning years of the Tang, the Türks were getting more aggressive, frequently invading the northern frontier of the Tang. It was because of their frequent military campaigns and the revolts of their vassal peoples, that the power of the Türks declined quite rapidly. Under the vigorous attacks of the Tang troops, the First Turkish Empire collapsed in 630. With the dissolution of the Türks, the Tang influence stretched further into Manchuria. The Dahe confederation of the Khitan with its eight nuclear tribes led by Kuge and a collateral tribe led by Quju submitted to the Tang in 648. They were then brought into the Tang tributary system. Under the "loose rein" of the Tang, the Khitan not only enjoyed a large degree of autonomy, but also obtained a lot of benefits from both the bestowals and frontier trade for financing their tribal economy. Their strength thus was increased rapidly in the next half century. As a consequence, they were strong enough to raise a ferocious rebellion against the Tang in 696, when famine relief failed to come and their leaders were mistreated by a Chinese local official. They were quite powerful, so that the Tang had a lot of trouble repressing them even by whatever means they could. It was with the assistance of the Xi and the Türks who had resurged after 682 that the Khitan rebellion was finally crushed in 697. At the dead end, the remnant Khitan turned to seek refuge with the Türks. Under the protection of the Türks, the Khitan again avoided being

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entirely eliminated. Yet, when the Türks were on the decline after their capable khaghan Mochuo was murdered in 716, the Khitan submitted again to the Tang with other former Turkish vassal peoples. The Khitan then not only returned to the Tang tributary system again, but also gained a marriage alliance with the Tang imperial clan. Throughout the sharp and cruel internal conflicts, Nieli, the ancestor of the imperial family of the Khitan Empire, overthrew the leadership of the Dahe family with the assistance of the Türks and established the leadership of the Yaonian family in the 730s.

In the greater part of the Yaonian period from the 730s till the 860s, the foreign policy of the Khitan became more conservative. This period could be regarded as the most critical stage in the pre-dynastic Khitan. In this period, the Khitan underwent a profound social reform, in order to re-organize the dispersed tribes, to recover their losses both the internal and external wars, and to increase their strength for further development. One of the important measures was the re-adjustment of their foreign policy from alternatively attaching themselves to one of the powerful neighboring forces to giving their allegiance to the two stronger forces both in China and on the steppe, the Tang China and the Uighurs (745-840). In this period, the leaders of the Yaonian tribal confederation paid more attention to their internal development, particularly to their economy. A peaceful external environment appeared more important for the Khitan. While seeking refuge with one of the two major forces, it was still hard to avoid the feelings of hostility from the other. Accepting the suzerainty of the Uighurs and keeping the tribute-bestowal relations with the Tang at the same time, however, could maintain smooth relationship between the both sides in order to make a peaceful external environment possible. In practice, the Khitan tried their best to avoid any active warfare against their neighboring peoples, with the exception of the conflicts with An Lushan during the period from 745 to 755. As a frontier commander, An Lushan frequently attacked and harassed the Khitan in his term of office, to curry favor with the Tang court. The Khitan resistance against An Lushan was really because they were indeed driven beyond the limit of tolerance. Even though the Khitan were quite powerful in the war against An Lushan, it can be imaged that the ten-year conflicts inevitably inflicted grievous losses on the Khitan. After 755, the Khitan were not aggressive again until the 860s. The Japanese scholar Matsui Hitoshi attributes the Khitan's remaining quiescent in this period to the repression of the Xi on them.¹⁰ This view is far from accurate. The quiescence of the Khitan in appearance is, in fact, a reflection of the implementation of their conservative policy, according to some records on the Khitan's state building and external relations in this period in the Chinese

¹⁰ Matsui 1981. Repr. in: Sun, Jinji *et al.* 1988 (vol. 1), pp.112-117.

historical sources. In practice, under the more conservative foreign policy, the Khitan continued to pay tributes to the Tang court and tried their best to keep a smooth relationship with the regional governors of Lulong, (based at present Beijing, who concurrently controlled the Xi and Khitan), while giving their allegiance to the Uighurs. In such a relatively peaceful external environment, the Khitan concentrated on their internal development, gradually accumulating a considerable strength for future external expansion after the 860s and the further establishment of a powerful dynasty.

Painful lessons of aggressive actions. The initiation and gradual revision of the conservative policy of the Khitan was more likely to be related to some painful experiences of the failures caused by their aggressive actions in the past. By learning lessons from these painful experiences, the Khitan revised their foreign policy gradually from an aggressive one like those of most northern barbarians into a conservative one. This can probably be regarded as a crucial importance to their final success. In their pre-dynastic history, the Khitan had experienced several occasions of frustration caused by their aggressive foreign policy.

As early as 553, their raids on the northern border of China provoked a major punitive expedition by the Northern Qi, which inflicted heavy losses on the Khitan with more than 100,000 people and 100,000 livestock driven to the Northern Qi. This failure of their aggressive action can probably be regarded as a major cause, which scattered the Khitan tribes in the following few decades. In 605, after re-uniting together into a powerful strength, the Khitan aggressively staged a large-scale invasion upon the Sui frontier. They were finally defeated by the Sui troops in alliance with the Türks, losing 40,000 men and women, who were distributed to the Sui and Türks. As a result, the Khitan had no alternative but to yield themselves to the pressure of the Türks in the next couple of decades. In 696, the Khitan raised a fierce rebellion against the Tang, because they were mistreated by the Tang local officials. It was finally crushed by the Tang troops with the aid of the Türks and Xi. The failure of this rebellion added to the internal conflicts created by their military chief Ketuyu left the Khitan much reduced in population and caused their tribes again to disperse. The result as recorded in the *Liao Shi* was that the Dahe family was on the decline with only five of the eight tribes left¹¹. The Khitan, therefore, were driven onto the verge of dissolution.

The Khitan leaders probably recognized of that continuing with such an aggressive foreign policy would inevitably bring the Khitan into a crisis with the extermination of an entire nation. To extricate them from such a crisis and to seek existence in the crevice between stronger political forces, the Khitan had no alternative but to change their foreign policy to a more conservative one.

¹¹ *LS* 33. 395.

Failure of the Xi – a negative example. The Xi (were called Kumo Xi before the Sui Dynasty) tribes, who were close neighbors of the Khitan to the west, had some kind of kinship relations with the Khitan. Before 388, the Xi and Khitan had belonged to the same tribal complex. In 388, a major attack mounted by the Northern Wei made them split into two independent political forces. In the following four hundred years, the development of the Xi ran parallel with that of the Khitan until the middle of the 8th Century. In the period of the Tang Dynasty, the Xi and Khitan were equally called "*liangfan*" (two barbarians), which meant that they had almost equal strength and similar political fate. In the Chinese historical sources from the *Wei Shu* to the *Xin Tangshu*, the Xi had similar importance to the Khitan. However, in the middle of the Tang Dynasty, the Xi had become much more powerful. Their strength had exceeded that of the Khitan for a period of time. For example, when the Khitan were on a temporary decline after the collapse of the Li-Sun rebellion and Ketuyu's coups, they had attached themselves to the Xi king for a time in the 730s.¹² The other example is that the remnant Uighurs relied on the Xi for food-supply after the dissolution of the Uighur Empire¹³. Moreover, the Xi appeared quite active in the period from 755 until 847, being involved in An Lushan's revolt and the wars with both the Tang troops and frontier governors. Nevertheless, why did the Khitan but not the Xi take advantage of the collapse of the central order both in China and on the steppe to rise up? This question indeed needs to be taken into account. By carefully comparing the Xi history (which was before the Xi were conquered by the Khitan) to the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan, it can be seen that the Xi were quite aggressive, contrary to the Khitan's conservative position in the period from the 750s through the 840s. The aggressive actions conducted by the Xi in the later part of their independent history, inevitably consumed their strength to a great degree. It was also because of the practice of their aggressive policy that the Xi found it impossible to concentrate on their internal development, as the Khitan did in this period of time. As a consequence, the Xi lost the opportunity to grow by taking advantage of the fall of central order both in China and on the steppe. This is probably the principle reason for the Xi's failure. Following are some concrete examples of the Xi's active posture in this period of time.

During the period from 755 to 763, the Xi involved themselves greatly in An Lushan's rebellion. As recorded in the *Biography of An Lushan* of the *Xin Tangshu*, tens of thousands of the Xi, who were in the side of the rebel army, had been at war with the Tang and Uighur troops on several occasions. Finally, they were disastrously defeated and most of them were killed on the battlefields.¹⁴ The

¹² *Idem* 63. 955.

¹³ *JTS* 195. 5215.

¹⁴ *XTS* 225. 6421.

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disaster of war during An Lushan's rebellion inflicted heavy losses on the Xi, leaving the Xi not only much reduced in population but also with a drain on their material and financial resources.

Nevertheless, the Xi did not draw a lesson from such a painful failure to stop their aggressive posture as the Khitan did. On the contrary, they still continued their aggressive policy and were quite active on the frontiers of China after they just got recovered in the next two decades followed the formidable rebellion. The temporarily strong Xi in this period probably needed more Chinese resources to fund their confederation and to stabilize their authority. However, An Lushan's rebellion broke off the communications between the Xi and Tang court. Therefore, it was impossible for the Xi to extort Chinese products by peaceful means either by tribute or trade. The Xi had no alternative but to resort to armed force. In the following seven decades, the Xi frequently made raids on the Tang borders from Lingzhou (southwest of modern Lingwu County of Ningxia Autonomous Region) in the west to Pingzhou (modern Lulong County of Hebei Province) in the east, confronting the regional governors of Lulong. In 788, the Xi wantonly invaded the Zhenwu Army together with the Shiwei, plundering numbers of human beings and livestock and then leaving back to their homeland.¹⁵ In the next few years, the Xi frequently raided the northern border of Lulong.¹⁶ These invasive actions inevitably provoked a major Tang counterattack. In 795, when the Xi again made a border raid on Pingzhou, Liu Ji, the military governor of Pinglu, inflicted a crushing defeat on the 60,000 Xi tribesmen. As a result, 20,000 of the Xi were killed.¹⁷ However, the Xi did not take their defeat lying down, and soon after invaded the northern borders of Tanzhou (modern Miyun County of Beijing) and Jizhou (modern Ji County of Hebei Province) to the west. They were again defeated by Liu Ji allied with the Shiwei.¹⁸ Even these disastrous defeats made the Xi keep quiescent for only about ten years. After they had just recovered their strength, the Xi took advantage of the impotence in the northern frontier defense of the Tang¹⁹, and frequently made unbridled incursions on the Tang borders. They raided Lingzhou to the west in 810.²⁰ One month later, they invaded the Zhenwu Army by secretly allying with the Uighurs and Shiwei.²¹ Following up their success in the west, the Xi turned to raid Youzhou to the east in 830. Unfortunately, they met with a heavy blow struck by Li Zaiyi, a capable

¹⁵ *Idem* 219. 6175.

¹⁶ *Idem* 212. 5974.

¹⁷ *Idem* 212. 5974 & 219. 6175.

¹⁸ *Idem* 212. 5974.

¹⁹ *ZZTJ* 239.7700-7701.

²⁰ *Idem* 238. 7676.

²¹ *JTS* 14. 431.

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military governor of Lulong. The Tang troops led by Li Zaiyi crossed the border and drove straight into the Xi territory. As a consequence, over 5,000 Xi people were killed and more than 200 Xi chiefs were captured including their king Rujie.²² This successful campaign of the Tang seriously frustrated the Xi and made them keep peaceful in next seventeen years.

However, some Xi tribes in the northern mountains rebelled against the Tang in 847. They were disastrously defeated by Zhang Zhongwu, a frontier commander of Lulong. More than 20,000 camps were burnt, and 300 chiefs plus 7,000 livestock and 500 carts of impedimenta were captured.²³ It is more likely that these numbers were exaggerated by the Chinese historical sources. But it undoubtedly that this was a deadly defeat to the Xi. After this setback, the Xi were on the decline and never were able to recover again. In addition, the external situation changed dramatically in the following years. Taking advantage of the dissolution of central authority both on the steppe and in China, their kinsmen the Khitan were rising as a major political force in northeast Asia. The Xi, therefore, became the first target of the Khitan foreign expansion, and gradually were incorporated into the Khitan.

From the above examples, it can be seen how the Xi's strength was rapidly consumed in the latter part of their independent history from 755 through 847. This period was exactly the period when the Khitan tried their best to accumulated strength by practicing their conservative policy. At the same time when the Khitan tried every means to concentrate on their internal development to rise in the future, the Xi were quite aggressive in raiding borders. It is obviously noticed that the Khitan and Xi carried out diametrically different policies in this critical period of their respective history of development. These different policies finally brought about completely different political fates to these two peoples. The important fact is that the conservative policy made it possible for the Khitan to accumulate considerable strength for their final rise. On the contrary, the aggressive policy drove the Xi to the verge of extermination. Despite some other reasons, the different policy-stands significantly determined that it was the Khitan but not the Xi who could take advantage of the change of external situation in northeast Asia at the end of the 9th Century and to rise as a great empire.

By understanding the conservative policy and its implementation by the Khitan in the greater part of their pre-dynastic period, and particularly in the latter part of this period, it seems to be easier for us to provide more sufficient explanations to those general problems in the pre-dynastic history of the Khitan. The tight squeeze, mainly from stronger neighbors both in China and on the steppe,

²² *XTS* 219. 6175.

²³ *Idem.*

had restrained the development of the Khitan and made it impossible for them to extend their power for a long period of time. However, it was the practice of the conservative policy that prevented the Khitan from being eliminated by their more powerful external enemies again and again. The external repression interweaved with the Khitan's practice of conservative policy resulted in an extremely long lasting pre-dynastic history for the Khitan. In addition, the conservative policy was a basic strategy in the Khitan foreign relations, particularly in the latter part of their pre-dynastic period. This policy was developed by the Khitan from attaching themselves to one of the stronger political powers into a more conservative one, which was pledging allegiance to the two forces both in China and on the steppe. In the course of this development, the Khitan tried their best to avoid any conflict with the neighboring peoples, in order to gradually accumulate strength for their ultimate rise. Furthermore, the conservative policy also could be regarded as a basis of the internal reasons for the rise of the Khitan, because its practice allowed the Khitan to concentrate on their internal development under a relatively peaceful external environment by avoiding conflicts with the neighboring peoples. The interaction between the internal conditions, based on the practice of conservative policy, and the dramatic change of international situation at the end of the 9th Century, was favorable to the Khitan and finally brought about the establishment of the Khitan state.

8.4. The Background of the Liao Dynasty

The establishment of the Khitan Liao Dynasty dramatically changed the international situation in northeast Asia. It not only ended a period of a three-century long bipolar world order, which was maintained by the united China under the rule of the Sui Dynasty (581-618) followed by the Tang (618-907) and united steppe under control of the Türks (583-745) succeeded by the Uighurs (744-840), but also started another period of a three-century long multi-state confrontation in which the Khitan Liao state played a dominant role. In the first part of the period of multi-state confrontation from 907 to 960, five successive Chinese dynasties in North China and ten Chinese kingdoms in South China confronted the Khitan to the northeast. In the second part of this period from 960 to 1127, the semi-united Chinese Northern Song, the Khitan Liao and the Tangut Xi Xia formed a tripartite confrontation. In the third part of this period from 1127 to 1227, another tripartite balance of forces had formed from the Chinese Southern Song, the Jurchen Jin and the Tangut Xi Xia.

In this multi-state system, the long traditional concept of Sino-centrism, which lasted from the 2nd Century B.C. until the 9th Century A.D., was strongly challenged. "China was no longer to be the center of the world and to demand that

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other states recognize it was superior"²⁴. In spite of its continuous superiority in culture, China had been on the decline since An Lushan's rebellion as early as the middle of the 8th Century. The disunited situation in the period of the Five Dynasties, which had developed from the confrontation of separatist military regimes in the northern frontier in the later Tang, marked the collapse of the central authority in China. Although the Northern Song was successful in reunifying most of China in the next one and half a centuries, its weakness, particularly in the military, was obvious. The Southern Song that controlled only South China, which centered in Lin'an (modern Hangzhou City of Zhejiang Province), was even weaker not only in the military but also in the politics and foreign relations. In addition, the foreign adversaries, whom the Chinese regimes were facing in the period from 907 to 1227, were the Khitan Liao succeeded by the Jurchen Jin to the northeast, and the Tangut Xi Xia to the west, had not only advantage in military force but also "had seized Chinese territory and could threaten more land"²⁵. Therefore, the Chinese regimes in the period of the Five Dynasties and both the Northern and Southern Song courts were forced to accept the reality of their own weaknesses and the equality with the foreign states.

In addition, the founding of the Khitan Liao state, as stated in *Alien Regimes and Border states, the Cambridge History of China 6*, "opened a second period of extensive foreign dominance in China, a period that would last for almost half a millennium and that reach its climax with the conquest by the Mongols of all of China in 1279"²⁶. Following the Khitan, the Tangut, Jurchen and Mongols successively had ever-increasing control over Chinese territory in the period from 907 to 1368. Compared to the foreign domination in China in the first period that was the disunited period of the Northern and Southern Dynasties from 386 to 581, the foreign control over China in this period appeared more extensive and longer lasting, and had exerted a more profound influence upon the ancient Chinese history. In appearance, it was China who was militarily and even politically conquered by the neighboring foreign peoples again and again in the above two periods. However, in substance, it was the foreign peoples who were conquered by the advanced Chinese civilization. Initially, in order to become legitimate inheritors of Chinese dynasties and to control the majority Han Chinese, the rulers of these foreign dynasties all carried out a policy of sinification. As a consequence, Chinese culture gradually infiltrated into every respect of these foreign societies. Finally, most of the Xianbei, Khitan, Tangut, and Jurchen were gradually sinified and assimilated to the Han Chinese. Objectively, the foreign

²⁴ Rossabi 1983, p. 4.

²⁵ *Idem.*

²⁶ Twitchet & Tietze. In Franke & Twitchett, eds., 1994, p. 43.

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conquests continuously made the Chinese territory extended, and the ethnic assimilation made the Han Chinese increase in population.

Furthermore, the strong and prosperous Liao Dynasty made the name “Khitan” become known in the world. As an intermediary in the communications between the Khitan state and the Western world, Russian, by mistake, regarded “Khitan” as the name of China, because of the influence of the Khitan State. This made the name “Khitan” become a synonym for China in the Slavonic world. With the westward migration of the Khitan after the fall of the Liao, the name “Khitan” was brought to the Western Regions. Afterward, with the expansion of the Mongols, the name “Khitan” was misused to designate the Chinese world in many Euro-Asian languages in forms as Kytay, Cathay, Kitai, Catai, Khata, Ghotai, Chata, Hita, Katai, Xetai, Katay and Cathan, for the Mongols called China “Khitan”. Until the present in Russian and many other Slavonic languages, China is still called Kitaia, Cathaia, or Cathay, which are different forms of transliteration of “Khitan”. It is also believed that Columbus’s discovery of America in the end of the 15th Century originated from his intention to look for India and the country of “Khitan”, which referred to China for a time in the Middle Ages.

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GLOSSARY

Personal Names

- Anluo 菴羅
 Abaoji 阿保機
 Abugu 阿卜固
 Anagui 阿那
 An Gu 安固
 An Lushan 安祿山
 Ashide Shubin 阿史德樞賓
 Ashina Guduolu 阿史那骨咄祿
 Ashinan Yuanzhen 阿史那元珍
 Bi 比
 Budugen 步度根
 Cao Renshi 曹仁師
 Chen 陳
 Chen Daren 陳大任
 Chenglügui 成律歸
 Chen Shu 陳述
 Chingis Khan 成吉思汗
 Chuluohou 處羅侯
 Cui Xuandao 崔宣道
 (Dahe) Mohui 大賀摩會
 Daluobian 大羅便
 Datou 達頭
 Diqincha 地勤察
 Dingguang Nu 定光奴
 Dou Bin 竇賓
 Dou Xian 竇憲
 Du Binke 杜賓客
 Dugu 獨孤
 Dunyugu 頓欲谷
 Duoji 咄吉
 Duoluo 咄羅
 Duomi 多彌
 Erzhu Rong 爾朱榮
 Fan Zhuyu 范祖禹
 Feng Ba 馮跋
 Feng Jiasheng 馮家昇
 Fucongzhi 匐從之
 Fu Jian 苻堅
 Fu Qian 服虔
 Gao Baoning 高寶寧
 Gewutu 葛烏菟
 Guduolu 骨咄祿
 Guli Peiluo 骨力裴羅
 Gu Jiegang 顧頡剛
 (Li 李) Guozhe 過折
 Hailing 頽領
 Han Long 韓龍
 Han Yanhui 韓延徽
 Han Ying 韓穎
 Han Zhen 韓貞
 Han Zhigu 韓知古
 He Axiao 何阿小
 Hechen 何辰
 He Jiami 何迦密
 Helian 和連
 Houdougui 侯豆歸
 Huaitou 槐頭
 Huang Chao 黃巢
 Huilibao 回離保
 Hu Sanxing 胡三省
 Inaba Iwakichi 稻葉岩吉
 Jia Wei 賈緯
 Jiefen 詰汾
 Jielifa Yijianchuo 頡利發伊健啜
 Jishou 佶首
 Julie 據埒
 Jun 浚
 Juqu 據曲
 Kang Moji 康默記
 Kebineng 柯比能
 Keduzhe 可度者
 Keluo 可羅
 Ketugan 可突干
 Ketuyu 可突于
 Kezui 柯最
 Kuge 窟哥
 Kumoli 枯莫離
 Laqian 刺乾
 Li Dapu 李大酺
 Li Duozuo 李多祚
 Li Guiguo 李歸國
 Li Huaijie 李懷節
 Li Huaixiu 李懷秀
 Li Jinzhong 李盡忠
 Li Kaigu 李楷固
 Li Kailuo 李楷洛
 Li Keyong 李克用
 Li Qiao 李嶠
 (Li) Qulu 李去閭
 Li Shimin 李世民
 Li Yanchong 李延寵
 Li Yuanhong 李元紘
 Li Zaiyi 李載義
 Liang Shidu 梁師都
 Li Shi Suogao 李詩瑣高
 Liu Ban 劉放
 Liu Boying 劉伯英
 Liu Can 劉粲
 Liu Cong 劉聰
 Liu Hu 劉虎
 Liu Ji 劉濟
 Liu Rengong 劉仁恭

- Liu Shouguang 劉守光
 Liu Shu 劉恕
 Liuxiu 六修
 Liwei 力微
 Louban 樓班
 Lou Shide 婁師德
 Luguan 祿官
 Luo Wuzheng 駱務整
 Lugu 路孤
 Lu Shiji 陸寶積
 (Li 李) Lusu 魯蘇
 Lü Guang 呂光
 Lun Qinling 論欽陵
 Lu Wenjin 盧文進
 Maodun 冒頓
 Ma Renjie 麻仁節
 Matsui Hitoshi 松井等
 Mijia 彌加
 Mochuo 默啜
 Mogui 莫珪
 Mogui 莫覓
 Mohuai 莫槐
 Mojilian 默棘連
 Mona 莫那
 Murong 慕容
 Murong Chui 慕容垂
 Murong Gui 慕容廆
 Murong Huang 慕容皝
 Murong Jiabin 慕容嘉賓
 Murong Sheng 慕容盛
 Murong Yong 慕容永
 Murong Yuanzhen 慕容元真
 Naihe 迺呵
 Nie Chongqi 聶崇岐
 Nili 泥禮
 Nieli 涅里 (涅禮)
 Niu Sengru 牛僧孺
 Noulisi 耨里思
 Nuosi 糯思
 Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修
 Otagi Matsuo 愛宕松男
 Pandie 潘埜
 Pang Xiaogong 龐孝恭
 Pei Kuan 裴寬
 Pidie 毗牒
 Puba 普拔
 Puhui 普回
 Qidegui 乞得龜
 Qishou 奇首
 Qi Sihe 齊思和
 Qinde 欽德
 Qitegui 乞特歸
 Qiubugun 丘不勤
 Qiuliju 丘里居
 Queji 厥機 (闕機)
 Queju 闕居
 Quju 曲據
 Qulie 屈列
 Qushu 屈戌
 Quzhu 去諸
 Rangan 染干
 Ren Dachun 任大椿
 Rilü Tuiyan 日律推演
 Rongwo Maili 容我梅里
 Rujie 茹羯
 Sage 薩葛
 Salade 薩刺德
 Saladi 撒刺的
 Shabolue 沙略
 Shamohan 沙末汗
 Shaogu 邵固
 Shazha Zhongyi 沙吒忠義
 Shennong 神農
 Shetu 攝圖
 Sheyigan 涉亦干
 (Li 李) Shihuo 失活
 Shidianmi 室點密
 Shi Le 石勒
 Shi Siming 史思明
 Shiyijian 什翼犍
 Shulan 述瀾
 Shulü 述律
 Sima Guang 司馬光
 Song Jing 宋璟
 Song Qi 宋祁
 Song Qingli 宋慶禮
 Suli 素利
 Su Dingfang 蘇定方
 Su Honghui 蘇宏暉
 Sun Aochao 孫敖曹
 Sun Quan 孫佺
 Sun Wanrong 孫萬榮
 Suogu 娑固
 Tadun 蹋頓
 Tang Xiujing 唐休璟
 Tanhan 貪汗
 Tanmozhe 貪沒折
 Tanshihuai 檀石槐
 Touluhou 投鹿侯
 Tudiji 突地稽
 Tudongsu 突董蘇
 (Li 李) Tugan 吐干
 Tumen 土門
 Tuoba Gui 拓跋珪
 Tuoba Tuiyan 拓跋推寅
 Tuyu 吐于
 Waihe 呵
 Wang Hui 王悔
 Wang Xiaojie 王孝傑
 Wang Xiong 王雄
 Wang Yu 王郁
 Wang Zoushi 王奏事
 Wei 韋
 Wei 禕
 Wei Yunqi 韋雲起
 Wu Chengci 烏承玘

Wu Yizong 武懿宗
 Wu Youyi 武攸宜
 Wuyu 勿于
 Wu Zetain 武則天
 Xi 熙
 Xialage 轄刺哥
 Xiao Han Jianu 蕭韓家奴
 Xiduguan 悉獨官
 Xi'er 習爾
 Xin Renling 辛文陵
 Xu Qinming 許欽明
 Xu Qinshan 許欽澹
 Xue Chuyu 薛楚玉
 Xue Deng 薛登
 Xue Kan 薛侃
 Xue Ne 薛訥
 Xue Tai 薛泰
 Xunniyan 遜呢延
 Yang 楊
 Yang Jian 楊堅
 Yang Xuanji 楊玄基
 Yang Yuansi 楊元嗣
 Yang Zaisi 楊再思
 Yali 雅里
 Yanai Wataru 箭內亘
 Yanliyou 宴荔游
 Yao Chou 姚璠
 Yanrou 閻柔
 Yelü Abaoji 耶律阿保機
 Yelü Dashi 耶律大石
 Yelü Yan 耶律儼
 Yelü Yanning 耶律延寧
 Yelü Yuzhi 耶律羽之
 Yelü Zhixian 耶律智先
 Yidougui 逸豆歸
 Yilu 猗廬
 (Guo 郭) Yingjie 英傑
 Yiyuanyu 乙窈羽
 Yongyulü 雍虞閭
 Yuchi Jingde 尉遲敬德
 Yugan 鬱干
 Yujie 鬱捷
 Yundeshi 勻德實
 Yuwen 欲穩
 Yuwen Gui 宇文歸
 Yuwen Mohuai 宇文莫槐
 Yuwen Tai 宇文泰
 Yuyu 鬱于
 Zhang Jian 張儉
 Zhang Jiujie 張九節
 (Zhang 張) Shoukui 守珪
 Zhang Xuanyu 張玄遇
 Zhang Zhongwu 張仲武
 Zhang Yu 章鈺
 Zhao Hanzhang 趙含章
 Zhao Yi 趙翼
 Zhangshao Mianju 張少免俱
 Zhao Wenhui 趙文翽

Zhao Zhizhong 趙志忠
 Zhijian LuoLuo 置鞬落羅
 Zhou Daowu 周道務
 Zhou Yiti 周以悌
 Zhouli Hunhe 晝里昏呵
 Zhu Kebao 諸可寶
 Zuzhen 祖真

Place names

Anci 安次
 Andong 安東
 Anhui 安徽
 Anzhou 安州
 Arun (river) 阿倫
 Ashina (prefecture) 阿史那
 Baicheng 白城
 Baideng (prefecture) 白登
 Bailang (river) 白狼
 Baoqiao (river) 鮑丘
 Beimie Limoli (river) 北也裏沒裏
 Beipiao (county) 北票
 Beishi (prefecture) 卑失
 Bing (zhou) 并 (州)
 Cang (zhou) 滄 (州)
 Cangzhou 倉州
 Chang'an 長安
 Changchuan 長川
 Changzhou 昌州
 Chaor (river) 綽爾
 Chaoyang 朝陽
 Chilue (prefecture) 叱略
 Chishan Zhou 赤山州
 Chuo (prefecture) 綽
 Chuo (river) 啜
 Dahan (mountains) 大罕山
 Daling (river) 大凌
 Dai (zhou) 代 (州)
 Daijun 代郡
 Daizhou 帶州
 Dao 道
 Dashan (mountains) 大山
 Datong 大同
 Daze (lake) 大澤
 Dingzhou 定州
 Dongdu 東都
 Dujin (mountain) 度斤山
 Dule (river) 獨樂
 Emur (river) 額木爾
 Erguna (river) 額爾古納
 Faku 法庫
 Fanchou 繁疇
 Fanyang 范陽
 Fen (zhou) 汾 (州)
 Feng (zhou) 豐 (州)
 Fuxin 阜新
 Gan (river) 甘
 Gansu 甘肅

Glossary

- Ganzhou 甘州
 Geluo (prefecture) 葛邏
 Guannei (dao) 關內道
 Guicheng Zhou 歸誠州
 Guiliu (river) 歸流
 Guiyi 歸義
 Guiyi Zhou 歸義州
 Gui (zhou) 媯 (州)
 Guyang 固陽
 Halegu (river) 哈勒古
 Han Cheng 漢城
 Han (cities) 漢
 Hangzhou 杭州
 Hebei 河北
 Hechen (river) 紇臣
 Hedong 河東
 Heisha 黑沙
 Hei (mountain) 黑山
 Helinger 和林格爾
 Helong 和龍
 Helu (prefecture) 賀魯
 Henan 河南
 Heng (zhou) 恒 (州)
 Hexi 河西
 Hexigten (banner) 克什克騰旗
 Horgin Youyi 科爾沁右翼
 Huaihuang 懷荒
 Huailai 懷來
 Huainan (dao) 淮南道
 Huang (river) 潢
 Huanglong 黃龍
 Huangzhang 黃
 Hubu (mountain) 胡布山
 Hulun (lake) 呼倫
 Hunyuan 渾源
 Huolin (river) 霍林
 Ji 薊
 Jiadie (prefecture) 口跌
 Jiangnan (dao) 江南道
 Jiangsu 江蘇
 Jiannan (dao) 劍南道
 Jilin 吉林
 Jin (county) 錦
 Jin (mountains) 金山
 Jingqili (river) 精奇里
 Jingyang 涇陽
 Jinyang 晉陽
 Jizhou 薊州
 Jizhou 冀州
 Julun (lake) 俱輪
 Juzhu (mountains) 句注山
 Kangping 康平
 Kexi Najie (river) 渴奚那頡
 Laoha (river) 老哈
 Laotou (mountain) 老頭山
 Lengxing (mountains) 冷陁
 li 里
 Lingnan (dao) 嶺南道
 Liangzhou 涼州
 Liao (river) 遼
 Liaodong 遼東
 Liaoning 遼寧
 Liaoxi 遼西
 Liaozhou 遼州
 Lin'an 臨安
 Ling (zhou) 靈 (州)
 Lingwu 靈武
 Lingzhou 靈州
 Lingde (hall) 麟德
 Liucheng 柳城
 Longyou 隴右
 Longyou (dao) 隴右道
 Lu 潞
 Luan (river) 灤
 Luhun (river) 鹿渾
 Lulong 盧龍
 Luoyang 洛陽
 Lushui (river) 潞水
 Mayu (mountain) 馬孟
 Miyun 密雲
 Mo (zhou) 漠 (州)
 Mogaidu (mountain) 磨蓋獨
 Muye (mountain) 木葉山
 Na (river)
 Nalu (mountain) 捺祿
 Nemor (river) 訥謨爾
 Nenjiang (river) 嫩江
 Ningxia 寧夏
 Nongnai Miao 農乃廟
 Nuomin (river) 諾敏
 Olji Moron (river) 烏力吉木仁
 Ongniud (banner) 翁牛特旗
 Pili Zhou 匹黎州
 Pingcheng 平城
 Pingdi Songlin 平地松林
 Pingliang 平涼
 Pinglu 平盧
 Pingzhou 平州
 Qiaoluo Zhou 峭落州
 Qinghai (lake) 青海
 Qinghe 清河
 Qingshan Zhou 青山州
 Qingzhou 青州
 Qiqihar 齊齊哈爾
 Raole 饒樂
 Raole Sui 饒樂水
 Rilian 日連州
 Ruoluo Sui 弱洛水
 Ruyuan 濡源
 Shaanxi 陝西
 Shandong 山東
 Shanggu 上谷
 Shannan (dao) 山南道
 Shanxi 山西
 Shanyu (protectorate) 單于督都府
 Sheli (prefecture) 舍利

- Shenmodan (river) 深末怛
 Shengle 盛樂
 Sheng (zhou) 勝 (州)
 Shijiazhuang 石家莊
 Shira Muren (river) 西拉木倫
 Shizhou 師州
 Shuimen (village) 水門
 Shuo (zhou) 朔 (州)
 Shoufang 朔方
 Shizhou 師州
 Sibi (prefecture) 思璧
 Sifang Guan 四方館
 Songmo 松漠
 Songzhou 宋州
 Tan (mountain) 炭
 Tanhan Zhou 彈汗州
 Tanzhou 檀州
 Tao'er (river) 洮兒
 Taowei Simoili (river) 陶謂思沒裏
 Tianjin Qiao 天津橋
 Tu (river) 土
 Tuhe Zhou 徒河州
 Tuhuzhen (river) 吐護真
 Ulanhot 烏蘭浩特
 Wandan Zhou 萬丹州
 Wanfo (cave) 萬佛
 Wangjian (river) 望建
 Wei (river) 渭
 Weizhou 威州
 Wozhou 沃州
 Wuyur (river) 烏裕
 Wufeng Zhou 無逢州
 Wugong 武功
 Wulan Sumu 烏蘭蘇木
 Wuwei 武威
 Xi (mountains) 西
 Xia (zhou) 夏 (州)
 Xi'an 西安
 Xiashi (gorge) 硤石
 Xihai (sea) 西海
 Xihe 西河
 Xincheng 新城
 Xinghe 興和
 Xingling (mountains) 陁嶺
 Xinkai (river) 新開
 Xinzhou 信州
 Xuanzhou 玄州
 Xuzhou 徐州
 Yan 燕
 Yangcheng 羊城
 Yi 義
 Yi (zhou) 易 (州)
 Yikun (prefecture) 儀坤
 Yilehuli (mountain) 伊勒呼里
 Yimin (river) 伊敏
 Yin (mountains) 陰
 Yingzhou 營州
 Yingzhou 瀛州
 Yinliang Chuan 陰涼川
 Yishi (prefecture) 藝失
 Yongzhou 永州
 Youzhou 幽州
 Yu (river)
 Yuguan 榆關
 Yuling Zhou 羽陵州
 Yunnan 雲南
 Yunzhong (protectorate) 雲中
 Yunzhou 雲州
 Yushe (prefecture) 郁射
 Yutian 玉田
 Yuyang 漁陽
 Zhaixing (range) 摘星
 Zhangbei 張北
 Zhangwu 彰武
 Zhaozhou 趙州
 Zhejiang 浙江
 Zhuozhou 涿州
 Zimeng Zhou 紫蒙州

Khitan tribes and clans

- Adahe 阿大何
 Bali 拔里
 Chufu 出伏
 Chute 楮特
 Dahe 大賀
 Daji 達稽
 Danjieli 旦利皆
 Dielie 迭烈
 Duhuo 獨活
 Erfu 二府
 Fenwen 芬間
 Fu 伏
 Fufuyu 伏弗郁
 Hebian 紇便
 Hedahe 何大何
 Jijie 集解
 Jufufu 具伏弗
 Li 黎
 Nahuiji 納會雞
 Neiji 內稽
 Newei 訥尾
 Niela 捏刺
 Pijie 匹絜
 Pin 品
 Pinmo 頻沒
 Rilian 日連
 Ruixi 芮奚
 Shenmi 審密
 Shenmi wubu 審密五部
 Shihuo 實活
 Shili 世里
 Shuhuo 蜀活
 Shulü 述律
 Songmo 松漠
 Tubian 突便

Tuju 突舉
 Tulübu 突呂不
 Tuliuyu 吐六于
 Wugui 烏隗
 Xiao 蕭
 Xiwa 奚嗚
 Xiwandan 悉萬丹
 Yaonian 遙輦
 Yelü 耶律
 Yelü qibu 耶律七部
 Yila 迭剌
 Yishi 乙室
 Yishige 乙失革
 Yishihuo 乙失活
 Yishihuo 乙室活
 Yishiyi 乙室已
 You Dabu 右大部
 Yuling 羽陵
 Yuyuling 郁羽陵
 Yuzhenhou 羽真侯
 Zhuijin 墜斤
 Zuo Dabu 左大部

Tribal and state names

Abusi 阿布思
 Ahui 阿會
 Aoshi 奧失
 Awudi 阿勿啼
 Bai 白
 Baiji 百濟
 Bai Xi 白霽
 Baximi 拔悉密
 Bayegu 拔野古
 Bayegu 拔曳固
 Bei Liang (kingdom, 401-439) 北涼
 Bei Shiwei 北室韋
 Bei Yan (kingdom, 409-436) 北燕
 Bohai 渤海
 Bo Shiwei 钵室韋
 Cao Wei (220-265) 曹魏
 Chebi 車鼻
 Chidi 赤狄
 Chuhe 處和
 Dada 韃韃
 Dagui 達媯
 Dai (kingdom, 315-376) 代
 Damo Shiwei 達末室韋
 Dangxiang 党項
 Da Ruzhe 大如者
 Da Shiwei 大室韋
 Da Tan 大檀
 Di 氏
 Didouyu 地豆于
 Diela 迭剌
 Dieladieda 迭剌迭達
 Dilie 敵烈
 Dingling 丁零

Donghu 東胡
 Dong Shiwei 東室韋
 Doumolou 豆莫婁
 Duan 段
 Duji 度稽
 Dulun Hejin 都倫紇斤
 Duoluowu 咄羅勿
 Early Qin (kingdom, 350-394) 前秦
 Early Yan (kingdom, 337-370) 前燕
 Fuyu 夫餘
 Gaochang 高昌
 Gaogouli 高句麗
 Gaoli 高麗
 Geluolu 葛邏祿
 Gesa 葛薩
 Gulunwugu 骨倫屋骨
 Han (kingdom, 308-319) 漢
 Hejie 和解
 Hei Chezi Shiwei 黑車子
 Hou Yan (kingdom, 384-409) 後燕
 Huangtou 黃頭
 Huduoge 胡咄葛
 Huigu 回鶻
 Huihe 回紇
 Hun 渾
 Huwensu 斛温素
 Jie 羯
 Kumo Xi 庫莫奚
 Lingxi 嶺西
 Ludan Shiwei 賂丹室韋
 Luotuo 駱駝
 Luozi Shiwei 落俎室韋
 Manchu Qing 滿清
 Menggu 萌古
 Mengwa Shiwei 蒙瓦室韋
 Mengwu Shiwei 蒙兀室韋
 Mo 貊
 Mogexiqi 貊歌息訖
 Mohe 靺鞨
 Moluhui 沒鹿回
 Murong 慕容
 Murong Xianbei 慕容鮮卑
 Murong Yan 慕容燕
 Nali 那禮
 Nan Shiwei 南室韋
 Nanzhao 南詔
 Nebeizhi 訥北支
 Poli 婆里
 Powo 婆葛
 Pugu 仆骨
 Pugu 僕固
 Qibi 契苾
 Qidan 契丹
 Qihu 契胡
 Rouran 柔然
 Ruru 蠕蠕
 Saigezhi 塞曷支
 Shanbei 山北

Shanbei Xi 山北奚
 Shatuo 沙陀
 Shenmodan Shiwei 深末怛室韋
 Shiwei 室韋
 Shiwei 失韋
 Shiwei 失圍
 Sijie 思結
 Sushen 肅慎
 Tantan 檀檀
 Tiefu Xiongnu 鐵弗匈奴
 Tiele 鐵勒
 Tongluo 同羅
 Tufan 吐蕃
 Tuhun 吐渾
 Tujue 突厥
 Tuoba 拓跋
 Tuoba Xianbei 拓跋鮮卑
 Tuyuhun 吐谷渾
 Wuhe 烏紇
 Wuhu 烏護
 Wusugu 烏素固
 Wuhuan 烏桓
 Wuji 勿吉
 Wuluohou 烏洛侯
 Wuluohu 烏羅護
 Wuluohun 烏羅渾
 Wusun 烏孫
 Wuwan 烏丸
 Xi 奚
 Xia (kingdom, 407-431) 夏
 Xianbei 鮮卑
 Xiao Ruzhe 小如者
 Xidan 奚丹
 Xinluo 新羅
 Xiongnu 匈奴
 Xi Shiwei 西室韋
 Xiyewu 奚耶勿
 Xueyantuo 薛延陀
 Xi Yan (kingdom, 384-394) 西燕
 Yanda 厭嗟
 Yaoluoge 藥羅葛
 Yaowuge 藥勿葛
 Yisaimo 移塞沒
 Yuanhe 袁紇
 Yuansi 元俟
 Yujue 于厥
 Yusheshi 鬱射施
 Yuwen 宇文
 Yuwen Xianbei 宇文鮮卑

Dynasty names

Chen (state, 557-589) 陳
 Eastern Han (25-220) 東漢
 Eastern Wei (534-550) 東魏
 Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 220) 漢
 Hou Han (the Later Han, 947-950) 後漢
 Later Jin (939-946) 後晉

Later Wei (another name of the northern Wei) 後魏
 Liao (907-1125) 遼
 Jin (265-420) 晉
 Jin (1115-1234) 金
 Ming (1368-1644) 明
 Northern Qi (550-577) 北齊
 Northern Song (960-1127) 北宋
 Northern Zhou (557-581) 北周
 Northern Wei (386-534) 北魏
 Qin (221 B.C.-207 B.C.) 秦
 Qing (1644-1911) 清
 Sui (581-618) 隋
 Tang (618-907) 唐
 Tuoba Wei (another name of the northern Wei) 拓跋魏
 Western Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 24) 西漢
 Western Jin (265-316) 西晉
 Western Wei (535-556) 西魏
 Xi Xia (1032-1127) 西夏
 Yuan (1271-1368) 元
 Yuan Wei (another name of the northern Wei) 元魏

Reign titles

Baoying (762-763) 寶應
 Chuigong (685-688) 垂拱
 Chuping (190-193) 初平
 Dali (766-779) 大曆
 Daoguang (1821-1850) 道光
 Daye (605-617) 大業
 Dengguo (386-396) 登國
 Guanghe (178-184) 光和
 Guangqi (885-888) 光啟
 Guangzhai (684) 光宅
 Huichang (841-846) 會昌
 Jiajing (1522-1566) 嘉靖
 Jianan (Jianan 196-220) 建安
 Jianguo (337-348) 建國
 Jianwu (25-56) 建武
 Jianyuan (343-344) 建元
 Jingming (500-504) 景明
 Jingyun (710-711) 景雲
 Kaicheng (836-840) 開成
 Kaihuang (581-600) 開皇
 Qianlong (1736-1795) 乾隆
 Qinglong (233-237) 青龍
 Shaoxing (1131-1162) 紹興
 Shengong (697) 神功
 Shenlong (705-707) 神龍
 Taihe (477-499) 太和
 Taihe (827-835) 太和
 Taining (323-326) 太寧
 Taiping Zhenjun (440-451) 太平真君
 Taixing (317-321) 太興
 Taiyuan (376-386) 太元
 Tianbao (550-559) 天保

Tianbao (742-756) 天寶
 Tianyou (905-907) 天祐
 Tongzhi (1862-1874) 同治
 Wansui Tongtian (696-697) 萬歲通天
 Wude (618-626) 武德
 Xianhe (326-334) 咸和
 Xianheng (670-674) 咸亨
 Xianqing (656-661) 顯慶
 Xiantong (860-874) 咸通
 Xiping (516-518) 熙平
 Yankang (220) 延康
 Yixi (405-418) 義熙
 Yongyuan (89-105) 永元
 Yuanhe (806-820) 元和
 Zaichu (689-690) 載初
 Zenguan (627-649) 貞觀
 Zhenyuan (785-805) 貞元
 Zhide (756-758) 至德
 Zongzhang (668-670) 總章

Titles

Baimei (khaghan) 白眉
 Bala (khaghan) 巴剌
 Baron of Wuji 無極
 Bijia (khaghan) 毗伽
 Chuluo (khaghan) 處羅
 (Commander in chief of) Qingbian Dao 清邊道大總管
 (Commander in chief of) Shenbing Dao 神兵道大總管
 Daizong (emperor) 代宗
 Dama Yueshali 達馬狻沙里
 Daowu (emperor) 道武
 Daren 大人
 Datou (khaghan) 達頭
 Dezong (emperor) 德宗
 Dezu (posthumous title) 德祖
 Duke Yongle 永樂
 Dulan (khaghan) 都藍
 Chunqin (empress) 淳親
 Fanyang Jiedushi 范陽節度使
 Fu (empress) 符
 Gaozong (emperor) 高宗
 Gaozu (emperor of the Northern Wei) 高祖
 Gaozu (emperor of the Sui) 高祖
 (general of) Wu Wei 武衛將軍
 (general of) You Baotao Wei 右豹韜衛將軍
 (general of) You Jinwu Wei 右金吾衛將軍
 (general of) You Wu Wei 右武衛將軍
 (general of) You Wuwei Wei 右武威衛將軍
 (general of) You Yuqian Wei 右玉鈐衛將軍
 (general of) Yunhui 雲麾將軍
 (general of) Zuo Jianmen Wei 左監門衛將軍
 (general of) Zuo Jinwu Wei 左金吾將軍
 (general of) Zuo Wei 左衛將軍
 (general of) Zuo Wei Wei 左威衛將軍
 (general of) Zuo Wu Wei 左武衛將軍

(general of) Zuo Xiao Wei 左驍衛將軍
 (general of) Zuo Yingyang Wei 左鷹揚衛將軍
 (general of) Zuo Yulin 左羽林將軍
 (Governor-general of) Raole 饒樂督都
 (Governor-general of) Songmo 松漠督都
 Governor-general of Yingzhou 營州督都
 (great Shanyu of) Jiedielishi 頡跌利失大單于
 Guanglu Dafu 光祿大夫
 Gedong Jiedushi 河東節度使
 Han Wudi (emperor) 漢武帝
 He (emperor) 和
 Hendejin (khaghan) 痕德堇
 Hezhu 紇主
 Huairen (khaghan) 懷仁
 Huandi (emperor) 桓帝
 Huang (legendary emperor) 黃
 Huhanye Shanyu 呼韓邪單于
 Hula (khaghan) 胡剌
 Jiedie Lishi (khaghan) 頡跌利施
 Jieli (khaghan) 頡利
 Ling (empress) 靈
 Jishizhong 給事中
 Jizi Guanglu Dafu 金紫光祿大夫
 Jun 君
 Junzhang 君長
 Kedun 可敦
 Kehan 可汗
 Xian Shoulin (king) 小獸林
 (marquis of) Xian 獻侯
 (military governor of) Lulong 盧龍節度使
 (military governor of) Youzhou 幽州節度使
 Mingdi (emperor) 明帝
 Mofuhe 莫弗賀 (紇)
 Mohefu 莫賀弗
 Mohefu 莫何弗
 Mudi (posthumous title) 穆帝
 Mugan (khaghan) 木杆
 Pinglu Jiedushi 平盧節度使
 (Prince of) Beiping 北平王
 (Prince of) Chongshun 崇順王
 (Prince of) Dongping 東平王
 (Prince of) Fengyi 奉義王
 (Prince of) Gongren 恭仁王
 (Prince of) Guanghua 廣化王
 (Prince of) Guishun 歸順王
 (Prince of) Guiyi 歸義王
 (Prince of) Liaoyang 遼陽王
 (Prince of) Qinhan 親漢王
 (Prince of) Xin'an 信安王
 (Prince of) Zhaoxin 昭信王
 (Princess of) Donghua 東華公主
 (Princess of) Jingle 靜樂公主
 (Princess of) Yanjun 燕郡公主
 (Princess of) Yifang 宜芳公主
 (Princess of) Yongle 永樂公主
 Qimin (khaghan) 啟民
 Ruhezhu 辱紇主
 Shabolue (khaghan) 沙 略

Shanyu 單于
 Shengwu (posthumous title) 聖武
 Shengzong (emperor) 聖宗
 Shi 使
 Shibi (khaghan) 始畢
 Shizong (emperor) 世宗
 Shizu (posthumous title) 始祖
 Shouling 首領
 Sijin 俟斤
 Sinong Shaoqin 司農少卿
 Su (khaghan) 蘇
 Suzong (emperor) 肅宗
 Suzu (posthumous title) 肅祖
 Taizong (emperor) 太宗
 Taizu (emperor) 太祖
 Tang Gaozong (emperor) 唐高宗
 Tejin 特進
 Tuli (khaghan) 突利
 Tulishe 突利設
 Tuobo (khaghan) 佉钵
 Tutun 吐屯
 Wa (khaghan) 洼
 Wei Taiwu (emperor) 魏太武
 Wendi (emperor) 文帝
 Wenxuan (emperor) 文宣
 Wenzong (emperor) 文宗
 Wu (empress) 武
 Wuhuang (posthumous title) 武皇
 Wushang (khaghan) 無上可汗
 Xiaguan Shangshu 夏官尚書
 Xiandi (emperor) 獻帝
 Xiandi (posthumous title) 獻帝
 Xianzhi (khaghan) 鮮質
 Xianzong (emperor) 憲宗
 Xianzu (emperor) 顯祖
 Xiaowen (emperor) 孝文
 Xuandi (posthumous title) 宣帝
 Xuanzong (emperor) 玄宗
 Xuanzu (posthumous title) 玄祖
 Yan (legendary emperor) 炎
 Yangdi (emperor) 炀帝
 Yehu (khaghan) 葉護
 Yelan (khaghan) 耶瀾
 Yili (Khitan khaghan) 伊利
 Yilijin 夷離堇
 Yingtian (empress) 應天
 Yizu (posthumous title) 懿祖
 Yuanwai Sanqichangshi 員外散騎常侍
 Zhangshi 長史
 Zhaocheng (posthumous title) 昭成
 Zhaodi (emperor) 昭帝
 Zhaogu (khaghan) 昭古
 Zhong Dafu 中大夫
 Zhongshu Sheren 中書舍人
 Zhu 主
 Zuwu (khaghan) 阻午

Book names

Bei Shi 備史
 Guang Yun 廣韻
 Hairi Lou Zhacong 海日樓札叢
 Hu Ke Tongjian Jiao Song Ji 胡刻通鑒正文校宋記
 Hu Qiao Xianlu Ji 胡嶠陷虜記
 Liao Wenhui 遼文匯
 Luting Zaji 虜庭雜記
 Shilu 實錄
 Song Shi 宋史
 Taiping Yulan 太平御覽
 Wei Zhi 魏志
 Wen Yuan Yinghua 文苑英華
 Xu Zizhi Tongjian Changbian 續資治通鑒長編
 Yuanhe Xingzuan 元和姓纂
 Zi Lin 字林
 Zizhi Tongjian Kaoyi 資治通鑒考異

Others

An-Shi (rebellion) 安史
 Baina 百衲 edition
 Beijian 北監 edition
 Beiping 北平 Army
 bianfa 辨髮
 biebu 別部
 biezong 別種
 bu 部
 Chaice Yi 柴册儀
 chen 辰
 Cheng 城
 cun 寸
 Danshu Tiequan 丹書鐵券
 Daoguang (edition) 道光
 Dian (edition) 殿
 duan 段
 Fudan (university) 復旦
 Gaoyang (army) 高陽
 gudu 鼓蘘
 Guozi Jian 國子監
 Han'er Si 漢兒司
 Henghai (army) 橫海
 Hengyang (army) 恒陽
 hu 斛
 Huadong (normal university) 華東
 Jigu Ge (edition) 汲古閣
 jimi 羈縻
 jin 斤
 Jinglue (army) 經略
 Jingsai (army) 靜塞
 Jingxi (army) 靜析
 Jun 軍
 Juying Zhai (edition) 懼盈齋
 kunfa 髡髮
 Langdang 萇蓉
 lei 類
 liangfan 兩蕃
 liqiang er heruo 離強而合弱

Li-Sun (rebellion) 李孫
mao 卯
Nanjian (edition) 南監
pifa 披髮/ 被髮
Pinyin 拼音
Qianlong (edition) 乾隆
Qingyi (army) 清夷
Qisheng (army) 啟聖
Qiuliang 糗糧
Shi Hang (edition) 十行
Shiliu Hang (edition) 十六行
Shiliu Wei 十六衛
Shixuan 世選
Shouzhuo 守捉
Sinong Si 司農寺
suofa 索髮
Tangxing (army) 唐興
weifu 威服
Weiwu (army) 威武
Wenren Quan (edition) 聞人詮
Wushen 戊申
Wutou 烏頭
Yingwu Dian (edition) 英武殿
yiyi zhi yi 以夷治夷
yizhong tonglei 異種同類
yuanjiao er jingong 遠交而近攻
Yushi Tai 御史臺
Zaisheng Yi 再生儀
Zhejiang Shuju (edition) 浙江書局
Zhen 鎮
Zhenwu (garrison) 振武
zheng 正
zhong 種
zu 族
Zuo 左 and You 右 Jianmen Wei 監門衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Jinwu Wei 金吾衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Lingjun Wei 領軍衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Qianniu Wei 千牛衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Wei 衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Wei Wei 威衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Wu Wei 武衛
Zuo 左 and You 右 Xiaowei 驍衛
Zuogu Tang (edition) 藪古堂